



'Maharaja' is a naked exposure of the debauchery, dissipation and drunkenness of the Indian royalty during their pre-merger heydays. Being the Diwan of Patiala and Kapurthala the author has seen it all: His Highnesses in their deepest low of inhuman lust and wild eccentricities. For them nothing was sacred, nothing forbidden; even religion was a smokescreen for immorality. Leela Bhavans and Rang Mahals, whether in Patiala or Alwar, Baroda or Indore, Faridkot or Junagarh, reeked with unholy passion that would shame even Nero's Rome.

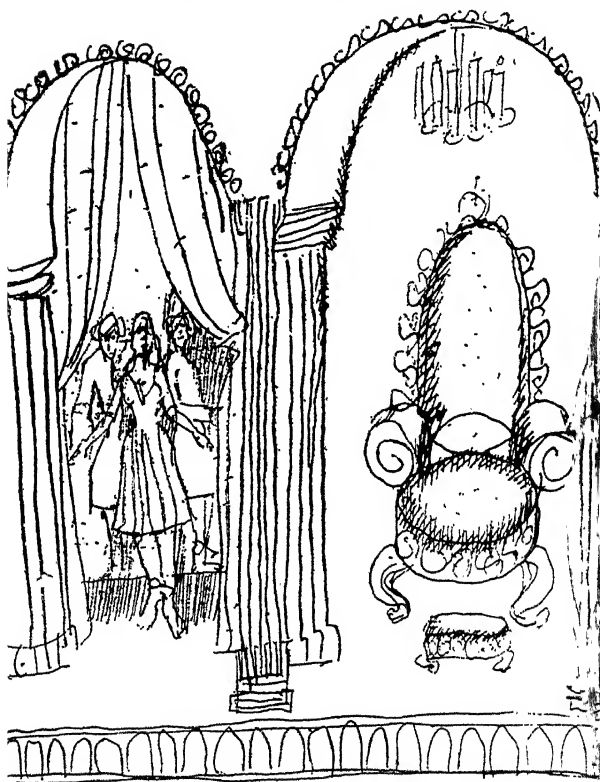
Diwan Jarmani Dass served the princely houses of Kapurthala and Patiala as Minister, winning decorations in India and abroad for his meritorious work. He was an Adviser to the Princes' delegation at the First and Second Table Conferences in 1926 and 1930 in London. A widely travelled man and a keen student of French literature, his very first book has taken the country by storm.

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# MAHARAJA

## DIWAN JARMANI DASS





*Maharaja*

by Diwan Jarmani Dass

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*In memory of those who suffered under  
the erstwhile Princely order.*



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## I *A Maharaja's Day*

**C**OLONEL HIS HIGHNESS Farzand-i-Dilband (Beloved son) Rasikhul-Itikad (Trusted Friend) Daulat-i-Inglishia (British Crown) Raja-i-Rajgan (King of Kings) Maharaja Sir Ranbir Singh Rajendra Bahadur, G.C.I.E., K.C.S.I., etc., ruler of Jindh state in the Punjab was stone deaf and lived to the mature age of 75. He celebrated the golden jubilee of his reign and received high honours and decorations from His Majesty the King of England and Emperor of India for his meritorious services which he had rendered not to the people of his own State and India, but to His Imperial Majesty and the British Empire.

He was used to keeping late nights and it was customary for him to be woken up only at 4 in the afternoon by his English Maharani Dorothy and a few Indian women by pressing softly his legs and chanting songs in slow melodious tones, and then his bed tea was brought to him.

The Maharaja was superstitious and used to order the night before that he would see the faces of such and such women when he woke up, as he believed it would bring him happiness for the next 24 hours. He and the State Astrologer, Pandit Karan Chand, used to sit for hours beforehand consulting books on astrology and Maharaja's horoscope to name the persons to be presented for first interview with the Maharaja immediately after he woke up.

Outside his bed room would be waiting the Prime Minister, Sir Behari Lall Dhingra, who was the favourite of the Maharaja and other Ministers of the Government including Pandit Ram Rattan, Home Minister, along with the Aides de Camp in uniform. He lived in the Palace called 'Hermitage' also known as 'Ghabdan,' after the name of the village of that name, and this Palace was built at a distance of six miles from



Sangrur, the capital of the State in northern India.

As soon as Ranbir Singh was ready, breakfast was served with a bottle of champagne, and the courtiers were ushered in to pay their respects. If Ranbir Singh happened to be in good mood, he returned their salutations with a smile, otherwise he ignored them altogether, and that was a signal eloquent enough to the officers to retire without uttering a word to the Maharaja. No business of State or of private nature was conducted at that time. After taking a few glasses of champagne and a few cups of tea alternately, the Maharaja got himself massaged with cocoanut oil and after taking his bath in a tub scented with French bath salts and dressing himself, he came out to the main drawing room where Dorothy, his daughters and sons and some of the principal officials of the State were present. Sitting in their midst he had a few glasses of brandy which he relished much.

Ranbir Singh was stone deaf but he had developed the faculty of guessing words from the movement of the lips of those who spoke to him. The conversation went on in this way between the Maharaja, the members of his family and officials who collected daily in the drawing room of the Palace.

At about 11-30 p.m. dinner was served which lasted for about two hours. After dinner, the Maharaja played cards with some officials of the State and his guests. His favourite games were bridge and billiards at which he invariably lost a few thousand rupees every night. The games continued till 4 a.m. and sometimes till dawn. By that time the Maharaja had taken 25 large pegs of brandy which was his normal quota for the night. He retired with his favourite Maharani and was not visible again till 4 p.m. the next day. He had only one meal and that was dinner. The Maharaja changed his daily routine only on the occasion of the visits of the Viceroy and other distinguished guests to suit their convenience. He felt unhappy when he was thus obliged to alter his normal timings, but as he was fond of shooting big game, he adjusted himself

to the time and occasion.

Cheetah hunting was his favourite sport. He was very fond of bringing up Cheetahs and making them fight duels with tigers. The Cheetahs were taken to the forest in cages and released to face the tigers. There used to be a battle royal between them. The Cheetahs were also taken to overpower the herds of antelopes. Being trained animals, they returned to their cages after the fight was over. Out of 365 days of the year, he used to spend 130 days in field trials and the remaining days in other sporting pastimes. He was a great lover of dogs and had the best breeds in his famed kennels.

Occasionally, he altered his own programme by getting up at 8 a.m. and after having his morning breakfast he would go straight to the forest nearby to shoot partridges, peacocks, pheasants, quails and other birds which were in abundance in the vicinity and he returned by mid-day.

After taking bath, he would have his lunch at one in the afternoon and after taking rest for an hour, he used to go again for shooting with some friends and officers of his palace. He would then return at 8 p.m. when he would have his usual round of drinks till 11 or 12 p.m. He had made a convention of meeting the Viceroy and other distinguished guests only at lunches as he pretended that he was advised by his medical advisers not to take dinner at night. He pretended in order not to miss his quota of 25 big pegs of brandy and thus be free from all formalities of entertaining the Viceroy and other distinguished guests at night.

This programme was observed both in summer and winter. In summer he used to go to Khunga where he had a bungalow at the Canal bank and it was surrounded by several tanks where he used to fish and cook a meal himself. The whole day was spent in cooking and fishing and he had ordered that during summer months as in winter months, no official should talk to him about State affairs in Khunga, particularly where he was not to be disturbed by any State work.

The Maharaja spent most of his time in sleeping, drinking brandy, playing cards and shooting. When a Chief Minister was appointed by him with the approval of the Viceroy of India he stuck to him for life. His Chief Minister became dictators and the Ministers of the Court and others behaved in the most arrogant way.

The Maharaja having no time for administrative work, all the same, received the highest awards and honours which the King Emperor could bestow on an Indian Prince. He was Knight Grand Commander of the Indian Empire. He was given high honorary military rank, being a favourite of the British Government and the King Emperor. His greatest qualification was that he did not interfere in the State administration and occupied his time in merrymaking, leaving the administration in the hands of his Chief Ministers who were the henchmen of the British Viceroys. The State was administered according to the wishes and commands of the Viceroys and the Political Department.

## 2    *The Palace of Gaiety*

“**L**EELA BHAVAN,” THE Palace of Gaiety, was constructed by Maharaja Bhupinder Singh, Ruler of Patiala, in his early youth, in Patiala City on the road to Bhupinder Nagar near Baradari Gardens. It has one entrance with a massive iron gate and the passage through this entrance to the garden is zig-zag, so the passer-by on the road cannot see more than a few yards inside the palace. The walls of this palace are thirty feet high and are also built in a zig-zag manner. Huge and tall eucalyptus and other tropical trees, near the walls, further hide the view from outside. The idea was that if the passage to the garden was straight, the passers-by and the courtiers could have a glimpse of what was happening inside the Palace. After a few hundred yards of zig-zag roads walled up on both sides, one enters into a magnificent garden, unique of its kind in India. The Palace is gorgeously furnished and has several bed rooms with verandas well furnished in European style.

There is a special room called the “Love Chamber” exclusively reserved for the Maharaja. The walls of this room are covered with most artistic old and rare paintings in hundreds of sexual poses. This room is furnished in pure Indian style with carpets studded in precious pearls and rubies, diamonds and other precious stones. It has pillows of blue velvet also set in a number of costly stones. Luxurious hammocks swinging right and left contribute a great deal to a perfect setting for the enjoyment of the Maharaja.

Outside this Palace, there is a swimming pool, large enough for about 150 men and women to bathe. Maharaja Bhupinder Singh used to have magnificent parties which were known to be the finest and most voluptuous of their kind. In these parties, the Maharaja used to invite his favourite women to take part and

swim with him and two or three of his trusted officers and some favourite members of his family.

During the summer season, the swimming pool used to be filled up with water from the nearby canal and public reservoirs, but as the water was hot in summer, huge ice blocks were thrown into the water which lowered the temperature to a comfortable degree. As these ice blocks were floating in water, attendants, male and female, sprawled on them and floated around with glasses of whisky in their hands. As the women were exquisitely perfumed, the smell of the water in the pool was very tantalizing.

It was a gorgeous sight to see 50 to 60 women in transparent swimming costumes floating on ice blocks and serving drinks and snacks. At times, such parties went on for the whole night. While some men and women were bathing in the pool, others were singing and dancing. Some women were humming tunes sitting on the trees overlooking the pool. Generally such gaieties took place either in the extreme hot months of the year or during the monsoon. Food continued to be served from dusk to dawn without interruption. These were not set lunches or dinners but the most appetising delicacies and drinks served by women. The men servants and officers and military guards on duty were kept away in a special house, cut off from the main Palace. The only method of communication with them was by telephone or a secret passage through which the messages could be sent. These passages were well guarded by grey bearded, harmless elderly men over the age of 80 years who communicated the needs of the Maharaja to the officers on duty. Motor cars brought the Maharanis and other women inside the Palace to participate in the orgies of merry-making, while the cars used by the officers or members of the royal family had to be left outside the main gate. The tank in summer months felt like a glacier with outside temperature of 144 degrees F. in the shade, while the water in the bathing pool was 40 to 50 degrees.

It was seldom that a foreigner was invited to these functions. Only a European or an American woman who was the guest of the Maharaja at the Motibagh Palace at that time and with whom the Maharaja was carrying on amorous flirtation was allowed to play or swim in this ice-cooled dream of a pool.

### 3 *French Doctors of the Palace*

**H**IS HIGHNESS MAHARAJA Sir Bhupinder Singh, Ruler of Patiala State, was well versed in philosophy and Vedanta, politics, the teachings of Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism and so on. Philosophers, scientists, poets, religious leaders, politicians and leaders of various other societies and institutions used to crowd into the palace. The guest houses were always full and sometimes the guests remained for a year and sometimes for longer periods. No guest could leave the capital without the permission of the Maharaja which was invariably not given for months. The Maharaja used to get absorbed in philosophical, religious, and political conferences which lasted weeks and months, sometimes the whole day and night. He was one of the most learned and shrewd men of the epoch.

In his time, philosophers, astrologers, poets and religious teachers were received with great respect and they were royally treated and looked after at the palace. Those who were needy were given big allowances and monthly salaries for years and years. Though the poets of Urdu and Hindi languages were not so well patronised elsewhere as in the Maharaja's court they were preferred to other guests and were much honoured in every respect.

One day a well-known poet of the Punjab who had written books on poetry which were popular throughout India came to Patiala and told me that he was short of money and wanted some financial help from the Maharaja. Readily I informed the Maharaja and the poet was sent for. The poet wanted only about Rs. 300/- as a gift to carry on for about three or four months before he could start earning himself from the publication of his books. The Maharaja talked to him for a while and asked him what he desired for his maintenance. He said, "Your Highness, I only want

about Rs. 300/- and that amount will suffice." He recited a poem to this effect. The Maharaja hearing this told his Privy Purse Officer Colonel Gurdial Singh Dhillon to write out an order for the poet to be paid Rs. 1,000/- per month for his life time. Such was the Maharaja's generosity and bounty. He was a true patron of art and literature. The poet was perplexed at the generosity of the Maharaja and recited another poem of thanks. Up to the death of the Maharaja the poet was getting this allowance regularly from his Privy Purse.

There were many other instances where religious leaders, scientists, journalists and political leaders received money from the Maharaja. He donated liberally to the University and institutions for the poor. Even great leaders like Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, whenever they came to request the Maharaja, went away with a cheque for Rs. 50,000/- for Banaras University and other educational and charitable institutions.

The Maharaja was a student of sexology, and its adept practitioner. He used to invite scientific experts from all parts of the world for this purpose. He employed two British doctors, one by the name of Colonel Fox and the other Colonel Hayes who was also the Principal of King Edward Medical College, Lahore, and other Indian doctors of great repute. He used to invite Hindu, Muslim and Christian doctors to his palace. There were eminent doctors employed in the state, such as Colonel Narain Singh and Colonel Naranjan Singh.

Then there were doctors from France, prominent amongst them Dr. Joseph Dore, a famous surgeon of the Faculte De Science De Medicine. Incidentally he was the father of Dr. Francis Dore, the distinguished and popular Cultural Counsellor of the French Embassy who had come to India when young Dore was two years old and thus imbibed love for India from his infancy. The other physician was Dr. A Blondel, a specialist of Royal-Les-Bains, France. Both of them



were constantly in attendance at the Palace and continued to draw big salaries for years. But their services were requisitioned for other purposes than originally intended. Then, there were doctors in charge of hospitals who were German by birth. The Pathology Department of the Hospital was in charge of a very competent Viennese Doctor assisted by Indian doctors, trained in Europe. Dr. Politze, a well-known physician and radiologist, was in charge of the X-ray Department. He was professor at the University of Hesse. Besides the experts of modern medical science of Allopathy, there were institutions run by Unani and Vedic experts of the ancient Indian Schools of Medicine. The best Vaid was under the control of the famous Raj Vaid, King's physician, by the name of Pandit Ram Parshad and the Hakims under Shafa Ul Mulk Hakim Dilbar Hassan Khan, a descendent of the great Hakims in the time of the Mughal Emperors. The famous Hakims of Delhi were also called very often to the palace.

The great Hakim called Nabina Sahib, the Blind Healer, was a frequent visitor to the palace. Since he was blind he could diagnose disease only by holding the pulse of the patient, and left the modern practitioners wondering at his skill and intuition. His correct diagnosis and treatment won great fame. As some of the ladies of the Palace were not allowed to stretch out their hand for getting their pulse examined by a male doctor, he used to tie a thread round the wrist of the women and diagnosed the disease by holding the thread to his ear at a distance of about twenty yards, the distance between the bedroom of the patient and the Deohri, outer chamber, outside the inner palace.

In the court of the Maharaja there was no necessity for all this paraphernalia as most of the women could readily offer themselves for treatment by the doctors without any veil. They, however, were free with the European and American doctors though not so with the Hindu and Muslim Hakims and Vaid. The reason for this was that the Maharaja believed that the attitude

of the Europeans was different towards women from those of the Asiatics, particularly in sex matters.

Early in the morning all these doctors used to collect in a special waiting room in the Palace and after having talked about various matters connected with the illness of women, they dispersed to different parts of the Palace reserved for Maharanis, Ranis and other women of the Palace. Besides the male doctors, there were many highly qualified Lady Doctors, Europeans and Indians.

The doctors used to make rounds in the Palaces of Maharanis, Ranis and other women, and also paid visits to the Palaces reserved for children. After having taken their rounds, which lasted for two or three hours in the morning, and after taking notes of the various ailments from which the patients were suffering, they used to come and report to the Maharaja. Each of them carried a report book in which to record the ailments of women, the medicines prescribed, and the treatment suggested. This report was presented to the Maharaja in the presence of all the doctors when the conference took place.

As there were about 300 women in the Palace, it was not an easy matter for the doctors to write reports about each woman by name. To facilitate the process, they were enumerated in alphabetical order, viz., the Maharanis were indicated as A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, etc., and the Ranis were mentioned in numerical order viz., 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, etc., till it reached the figures of 150. Then there were other categories of women attached to the entourage of the Maharaja and they were classified on the chart as A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2, etc. The Maharaja had a list of all the women in the above order. A similar list was also kept with the doctors. These lists were confidential documents and the doctors were enjoined to treat them as such. The Maharaja's instructions were explicit, and these lists were not to be divulged to any outsider except myself and the personal physicians.

I was much esteemed and liked by the Maharanis

and other women at the Palace as I always cared for their health and welfare. I was present at most of these conferences at the Palace. From the list, the Maharaja could know which Maharani or Rani was sick, the nature of the illness and the treatment given to her. The lists were kept in the private room of the Maharaja, unseen or unnoticed by anybody and under lock and key.

When the Maharaja found that such and such a Maharani was not well, he would go and visit her to comfort her in every way. From the reports of the doctors, the Maharaja could know which of the women were free from disease or menstruation period. In order to detect this at a glance, he had ordered that such women during menstruation were to walk about with their hair down after washing and drying them. One could see many women walking about in this manner, and it was a signal to the Maharaja to avoid meeting them at night in intimacy. The women who were otherwise free from menstruation and healthy were asked to move about the private room of the Maharaja and were available to him at night, sitting on the floor on all sides of his big bed.

The bed was not an ordinary one: it was just like a three feet high, large cushioned sofa with silk mattresses covered with tapestry under which were spread the most artistic and valuable carpets from Kashmir, Kashan and Yezd in Iran. These women were allowed to have food with the Maharaja and the others who were not well had their food in their apartments or in the main dining hall.

All of them had sumptuous food and alcoholic drinks and they were all happy to be near their Lord.

Amongst the list of women who could keep company with the Maharaja in bed, if he so desired, were those who had been previously examined by the Indian lady doctors and French doctors to ensure that they were quite fit and healthy for his nocturnal pleasures.

The Maharaja was approaching his fifties, and as he was leading a licentious life, having had to do justice

to 300 women in the harem, he was ageing fast and did not have the strength and vigour which otherwise he should have possessed. To stimulate sexual vigour and restore failing health, ancient medicines and aphrodisiac drugs were prescribed.

The Maharaja, being keenly interested in sexual science, was very anxious to know from the French doctors how they could turn a middle aged woman into a young maiden so as to be equally attractive in generating the passion of her Lord and Master. For this purpose, French doctors used to infuse sensuous and provocative smells by giving them special vaginal injections, which excited the sexual lust of the Maharaja. Slides of the secretions from the mouth of the uterus were taken and Colonel Fox examined them pathologically with microscope and reported to the French doctors the result of his investigations. Perfume-creating germs were made active in the vagina and invigorated by injections, while germs causing bad odour were destroyed by douches prepared with caustic soda. This treatment was also given to young women who were found to have developed body odours on account of the irregularity of menstruation and for any other defects.

Medical research and treatment was carried out to make the women appear a picture of health and fragrance. Some who had big, unshapely or bulging breasts were operated upon by the surgeons to reduce the size of the breasts and to make them symmetrical in form. Breasts were sometimes shaped in accordance with the pattern given by the Maharaja. Sometimes he wanted the breasts to be oval shaped, sometime like Alfonso, the famous mango, and at other times like a peach. The French doctors were well versed in this art and the breasts were shaped exactly like the design given by the Maharaja. Facial and bodily beautification was also given attention. Hair dressing saloons and manicure and pedicure parlours were installed inside the precincts of the Palace under the direction of experts. Shops of precious jewellery and clothes of exquisite brocades and sarees from Banaras and France were

made available by famous jewellers and silk merchants, both Indian and foreign. Women were permitted to choose any article according to their own taste and requirement. The prices quoted by these merchants were exorbitant and they enriched themselves at the expense of the Maharaja who never questioned the price that they charged for their merchandise.

The Palace precincts were full of beautiful flowers and fir trees, roses, jasmine, tulips, chrysanthemums and other beautiful flowers. Scents from Lucknow, the luxury capital of India, and from France and Indian perfume sticks were burnt in the rooms of the women which had an intoxicating effect on any visitor.

It was a unique sight really to be marvelled at, meeting these three hundred beautiful women so exquisitely dressed and jewelled, and bedecked with flowers scented with the latest French creation. The Maharaja would crack jokes with one, pull the cheeks of another. Mirth and laughter was in plenty. The care-free atmosphere of gaiety could not be matched elsewhere in the world with such frivolity and exuberance as in the Moti Bagh Palace of the Maharaja.

After a woman had produced one or two children, Colonel Hayes used to cut the falubian tubes and sterilise her so that she should not bear more children.

Doctor Dore operated with great agility on serious cases of abdomen and uterus and tumor and his reputation as a cautious surgeon spread to other States where he was invited to perform operations. Usually, the Maharaja was present at these operations on his favourite women of the harem and took delight in watching these operations. Women were shy in the presence of Indian doctors but were quite free with European doctors and did not hesitate to have themselves examined by them daily. They lay naked in front of them in many rows and the doctors gave injections or applied medicine to improve their health. When a young virgin girl came to the bed of the Maharaja and the Maharaja encountered difficulty in performing sexual intercourse with her, the doctors were quite willing to

perform a minor operation to facilitate the intercourse.

Medicines, rich food and powerful tonics were also given to the Maharaja to rejuvenate him. Because of sexual debility caused by excessive indulgence the Maharaja was given special preparation of carrots, specific virtues of which were strengthened and enhanced by adding cerebellum of young male sparrows and other powerful vegetable and mineral ingredients.

Such medicines sometimes cost him Rs. 50 to 60 thousand, lasting only for a couple of days. This undoubtedly made the Maharaja feel much younger in years and more vigorous.

There were competitions between the Hakims of Delhi and other parts of India as to what "kushta" made of gold, real precious pearls, silver, iron and other metals and nutritive haemapinic, aphrodasiac and enervating tonics and drugs were more effective. Usually the Maharaja would report to his doctor their effect overnight after the use of the particular drug or tonic. There were conferences and meetings between the French, English and Indian doctors, Hakims and Vaidas on sexual science and further consultations were held to produce an elixir of life to infuse sex vigour. The French doctors also advised the Maharaja to use special electric appliances containing radium to increase the spermatogenic power and capacity of the testicles and to stimulate the erection centre, evoking sex vigour.

Such was the life of Maharaja Bhupinder Singh who excelled in sexology as he did in politics, macy, religion, philosophy and other sciences.

## 4 A Game of Cards

**M**AHARAJA BHUPINDER SINGH of Patiala was very fond of playing poker as played in Indian style which is with three cards instead of the English or American poker with five cards. In three cards poker, the highest is three aces which cannot be beaten by any other combination.

The Maharaja used to invite to his poker parties only two or three trusted Ministers and three or four of his favourite Maharanis along with his privy purse officer. Invitations were issued by telephone and those participating in the poker game were asked to bring with them sufficient money for the game. The Ministers used to take with them very small sums of money so that they might not lose too much money in the game. The Maharaja had his Privy Purse Officer, Col. Rit-mohinder Singh, to keep a bank account so that money could be loaned to parties who ran short of it.

The game usually started after midnight in the private apartment of the Maharaja at Moti Bagh Palace when the Maharaja and other players were in a happy and hilarious mood after a few cocktails and drinks and the game lasted for two or three hours in accordance with the wish and mood of the Maharaja.

Whenever a participant in the game ran short of money, he asked the Privy Purse Officer to lend him money and he had to sign a receipt for the amount advanced. Sometimes the loan ran upto five or six figures and the convention was that no loan could be refused by the Privy Purse Officer to those who were participating in the game. Usually the players took more loans than it was necessary to have. The game went on and some ministers and Maharanis, though they did not actually lose the amount which they brought with them, requested for more loans from the Privy Purse Officer, who without knowing whether the

request was genuine or not, had to accede to their demand. Invariably the game terminated when all those who were participating in the game had their pockets full and the Maharaja losing a great deal and the bank of the Privy Purse Officer was exhausted.

The game usually was not played according to the rules of the game but in a lighter vein. It was not pure gambling as any one who happened to hold the hand with three aces considered it an act of chivalry and politeness to the Maharaja, if instead of tempting him to increase his stake, the player asked for a 'show'. The Maharaja responded to such a gesture by giving handsome compensation to the person holding the highest cards. The Privy Purse Officer never claimed refund of the debts next morning and they were not intended to be repaid. Therefore, it provided a good opportunity for the Maharanis and other officials to fill their coffers and return home with large sums of money to their credit. Such was the game of poker played by Maharaja Bhupinder Singh of Patiala.



## 5     *The State Orchestra*

**T**HERE WAS AN International Cricket Match at the Patiala Gymkhana Club in which the State Team and the British Team were competing. Maharaja Bhupinder Singh of Patiala was the Captain of the State Team. Mr. Jardine, the famous Test Cricket player was captaining the British Team.

The State Cricket Team under the captaincy of the Maharaja was not as strong as the British Team, particularly as the British Team consisted of fast bowlers and superb batsmen.

The Maharaja's advisors Mr. Frank Tarrant, a famous Australian Bowler, Prime Minister Sir Liaquat Hayat Khan, Diwan Walaiti Ram, Secretary, Southern Punjab Cricket Association and Sirdar Buta Ram were anxious that the Maharaja's Team should win at all cost and requested the Maharaja to arrange receptions and banquets at the Palace to which the members of the British Team, the members of the State Team, the Principal Ministers and officials of the Government were invited.

This banquet was given on the eve of the Cricket match. Delicious food and intoxicating wines were served at the reception and banquet. The banquet was followed by a variety entertainment in which the dancing girls of the court danced and sang before the guests of the Maharaja. The members of the British Team indulged in merry making with the dancing girls and drank Scotch Whisky and choicest wines and before the party broke up, most of the members of the British Team were intoxicated and were taken to the guest house in cars escorted by the aides de-camp of the Maharaja.

The members of the Maharaja's Team were secretly told not to drink, so that they should be fit enough to play next morning. The banquet terminated in the

early hours of the morning and the British Team had no time to rest and when the players appeared on the cricket field, they were fagged out and gave a poor display of the game, whereas the members of the Maharaja's team were active and alert and scored well.

The same tactics were adopted throughout the five days of the match with the result that the Maharaja's team won the match and it was advertised all over the World, particularly in the British and Indian papers, that the Maharaja's Team beat the British Team. Nobody in the town knew about the secret of the success of the Maharaja's Team in this cricket match.

Every morning when the cricket match was over, a huge crowd was entertained at the club to enthralling music conducted by the famous musician, Max Gager, who came from Vienna and was put in charge of the State Orchestra.

The members of both the teams along with a number of officers of the Government were entertained to drinks in the Gymkhana Club after the match was over while the band was playing on the lawn.

The Maharaja after taking a few drinks thought that the band was not playing according to the tune and got up and took the place of the Conductor and he himself began to conduct the band. Then, began to march on foot all round the cricket field. The band consisting of 28 bandsmen followed the Maharaja and obeyed his instructions but instead of playing the classical music, either Indian or European, the Maharaja began to conduct the Orchestra by playing the Punjabi tunes. He did it well, but in his enthusiasm went round and round the cricket field several times.

After taking a dozen rounds, the Maharaja continued to lead the band and eventually walked out of the cricket field and went straight to the Moti Bagh Palace which was at a distance of 4 miles followed by the band, leaving the guests to themselves in a state of surprise and suspense. The Maharaja did not return to the Club but instead he went on conducting the orchestra on the platform of his Palace and did not

discontinue doing so till it was midnight.

The guests at the Gymkhana Club had therefore no option but to retire to their residences without saying "Goodnight" to the Maharaja or hearing the classical music of the famous band under the direction of Mr. Max Gager.

Such was the eccentricity of the Maharaja. The British Team lost both the glory of the match and the enjoyment of music.

## 6 *New Cult of Sex Worship*

**B**EFORE THE STORY begins about the new Tantrism or the new sex cult invented by His Highness Maharajadhiraj Sir Bhupinder Singh Bahadur, Ruler of Patiala State, it is essential to describe what the true Tantric cult is. Then alone will it be possible for one to understand the significance of Tantric rites and to know how the new cult started and how it came to be adopted by the Maharaja to satisfy his sex lust and lasciviousness.

In reality, the Tantric cult started by the Maharaja was quite different from the real and pure Tantric form of Hinduism and it was merely to serve the licentious purposes of the Maharaja, whose numerous women got sexual satisfaction under the guise of religion and the Maharaja did not lose his prestige or honour in their eyes as this act was more or less according to the religious beliefs of the women collected there in the spirit of religion. This sect or cult was confined only to those who were admitted to this cult and a vow of secrecy was taken from those who were admitted to be the members of this cult.

About half a century back, he must be a bold man who could talk of Tantrism as one of the means to the realisation of God—the Divine Principle in whom we all live, move and have our being, as the term involved worship, required the use of wine and observance of various apparently revolting practices. Abhichara rites or dark rites of Black Magic were performed for malevolent purposes in which deities like Vagala, Dhumavati and Chinnamasta are to be worshipped for the sake of causing injury to one's enemies, under the name of Tantrism. Thanks chiefly to the enlightened and fruitful labours of the late Sir John Woodroff, a Judge of the Calcutta High Court who had nobly stood up as a valiant knight in defence of

the outraged Tantra Sastra and of Agama Anussandhana Samity of which both he and the late Srijut A. Ghosh were the leading lights. It has now become possible for a student of philosophy, religion and practice of Tantrism to move on the path of knowledge. Because this investigation is no longer under a ban and is commonly recognised, the Tantra is no longer regarded simply a graft or a formation of the morbid on Hinduism.

As regards the age of Tantras with which the scholars of the present day are much concerned, it has been now established beyond doubt that it did not begin in the Puranic age only, but it was flourishing during the Vedic period as well. There are some who theorise that the Tantras are post-Buddhistic. This also cannot be accepted if the authorship of the Lalitivistra is of any value and there is no reason why it should not be so. In the 17th Chapter of that book it is said that Lord Buddha condemned the worship of Brahma, Indra, Vishnu, Katyayan, Ganpati and so forth. The Lalitivistra is a Buddhistic work of great authority though the Buddhists also have got their own Tantras and deities such as Abibudha, Prajna-paramita, Manjustri, Tara, Arya-Tara and so forth.

The Tantra literature dealing principally with the Tantra rituals laying down the process and the rules to be followed in this rite or that, was mostly produced long centuries before the Mohammedan conquest of the land. Many books of Tantra were, however, written in the 16th and 17th centuries of the Christian era. Works of this type continued to be produced even as late as the nineteenth century. The names of such works are:

- (a) *Kamyayantra Adhara* —By Mahamahopadhiyaya Parivrajacharya.
- (b) *Tantrasara* —By Krishnananda, which is most comprehensive and popular of the numerous digests that are known in Bengal.

(c) *Tantra-Depika* — By Gopalapachanna.

The Tantras have a deep philosophy as a base. Like the Sruti, the Tantras lay great emphasis on the necessity of initiation. It also emphasises the necessity of the teacher and the disciple being fully qualified. A good teacher is defined to be a man of pure birth and pure disposition who has senses under control. He should know the true meaning of the Agmas (Tantras) and all Sastras (scriptures) and be always good to others and engaged in the invoking of God's name, worship, meditation and offering oblations in the fire. He should have peaceful mind and possess the power of granting favours. He should know the Vedic teachings, be competent in Yoga and be charming like a god. The characteristics of a good disciple are :—

He should be of good parentage, of guileless disposition and be a seeker of the fourfold aim of human existence, viz. knowledge, power, production and labour. He should be well read in the Vedas and be intelligent. He should have his animal desires completely controlled and be always kind towards all animals and have faith in the next world. He should not associate with atheists (nastikas), be assiduous in his duties, alert in the discharge of his duties towards his parents and free from pride of birth, wealth and learning in the presence of his teacher. He should always be willing to sacrifice his own interests, even his life in the discharge of his duties to the teacher and be ever ready to serve him with humility. The disciples should always bear in mind that the teacher is immortal. This does not mean that the human teacher is so; he is the channel through which the spirit of God descends. The true teacher is supreme lord Brahma or Siva, the primordial Sakti. The position of the human teacher is one of very great responsibility which does not end with initiation.

The teacher has to look after the disciple's welfare in every respect and guide him. He is called the physician of the soul and a healthy soul can abide in only

a healthy body. He has to see that even in matters of health, the disciple goes the right way. The teacher who is conscious of his responsibilities does not initiate in a hurry and the Sastra enjoins that the disciple should not accept a teacher to whom he is not attached. The mode of initiative is not uniform and varies according to the disposition and the competence of the disciple. The ordinary mode of initiation is *Kriya Diksha*. This may be an elaborate process and consists of many rituals. Men of higher competence are initiated by other methods. The initiation which is the quickest and most effective is called *Vedha Diksha*. There are very few who possess the ability for this. A person initiated according to this method realises at once the oneness of his own self with that of the teacher, the mantra and the deity. He becomes, as the Tantra says, the very self of Siva. The disciple who is initiated according to other forms of *diksha* arrives at this realisation by slow degrees, each according to his talent. The object of the initiation is to lead the disciple to the realisation, as the Tantra beautifully puts it, "one's own *atma* (inner self) is the charming deity of one's worship. The universe is but its form". Such being the case, images and the like which are used for purposes of practice and employed to focus the faith of the disciple, are just accessories, although indispensable accessories. All our scriptures and Tantra say that it is beyond the average man's intelligence to apprehend the Supreme Being who is the ultimate reality. Tantra says, "The *Brahma* is mere *Jnana* and without a body cannot be worshipped by the average man; so a symbol is adopted by the average man for the purposes of his practice. The Tantra further says, "The deity of the *vipra* (ritualist) is in the fire into which he offers oblations, that of the man of contemplation is in his heart; the man who is not awakened sees him in the image but the man who knows the *Atma* sees him everywhere.

All the Tantras specify five aspects of teaching. The four aspects of worship are given above. The fifth aspect of the deity is beyond all description and all

worship, for that is the stage when the worshipper and the worshipped become one. It is the duty of the teacher to help his disciple to this realisation.

Initiation, as has already been said, is an absolute necessity. The Sanskrit word for this is '*diksha*' which means 'that which gives knowledge of things divine and destroys all that leads to fall'. It does not mean that the disciple who gets initiation becomes possessed of knowledge at once. It simply opens the door and the aspirant must realise himself by his own endeavours according to the directions of his teacher. If it is necessary for us to be guided by others for material sciences, worldly positions and advancement, how indispensable it is that we should be guided by one who is competent in our approach to the highest reality? In India the teacher does not attempt to initiate the disciple with his own form of practice, but in that form alone, for which he is competent. The mantras through which the initiation is given are considered to be as old as creation.

Again, the Tantra has its own conception regarding creation. The theories about it generally approximate to those of Sankhya philosophy which explains the created world by the double principle of Purusha and Prakriti, Purusha inactive and Prakriti active. Purusha is the being full of the light of consciousness, Prakriti is the nature mechanical reflecting all her works in the conscious witness, the Purusha and so forth. There is no doubt the Tantra uses its own technique to express the one and the same idea using *Siva* and *Brahma* or light for Purusha and *Sakti* for Prakriti. The Tantra says that the highest stage is *Kula*. The man becomes *Kaulika* who has passed through six *Achharas*. It has been said that it is only to that man whose mind is purified by the mantras of Siva, Vishnu, Durga, Surya, Ganesa and others that *Kula Jnana* manifests itself. It is a favourite pastime of some ignorant minds to indulge in invectives against the Tantras for use in worship of the five Tattavas (Principles) commonly called the five Ms. In Sanskrit all these words (Tattive) begin



with M. By these are meant wine, meat, fish, cereals and sexual union. These five articles have different meanings for different classes of worshippers.

It is to be noted that what one is required to offer is the Tattive and not the article itself. The Tattive of wine is bliss and the quickening of inner organs. The Guru teaches his disciple how this bliss and the quickened inner senses have to be utilised for the uplift of the mind from the material plane. Sexual union also, as understood from the material plane, is to be utilised for the same purpose. The Guru shows how these two acts, viz. drinking and cohabiting which lead to a man's fall ought not to be used as animals do for the mere gratification of the senses but for a higher purpose.

With reference to the fifth Tattive which is very sacred as it leads to the creation of a new life, the greatest care should be bestowed upon this act. It is absolutely erroneous to say that this Tattive encourages or even countenances sexual excess or irregularity. To break chastity, it says, is to lose or shorten life, it is by the preservation thereof that life is preserved. A man offers to his divinity only that which is pure and sanctified. The object of using these five Tattives in worship is that by the repeated practice of the ritualistic observances he acquires a nature whereby everything he does, in his ordinary life, becomes an act of worship. Sankracharya in his magnificent hymn to the Primordial Sakti concludes by saying "O Lady Supreme, may all the functions of my mind be thy remembrance, may all my words be thy praise, may all my acts be an obeisance unto thee". It is to induce a state of mind like this that these forms and articles are used in worship.

The aspirant has to learn from his teacher the proper use and the true significance of these five Tattives. Thus was seen that we begin with Bamachar which owing partly to the ignorance of the principles has made the whole science suspicious and end in Kula which is a method of profound truth. Man is to rise not by false and cowardly acts that make him fail, but by

seizing upon it and sublimating it as to make it his saviour. Such a method cannot be suited to every one's capacity. The ganja smoking which is so much in vogue among Sadhus must be traced to Tantarism.

The Tantra is the last synthesis and harmony in the Aryan synthetic culture in which diverse and sometimes conflicting tendencies of human endeavour have been accommodated to one another and each linked with the rest has been assured its fullest development.

The presence of Tantrism along with the orthodox Hinduism in India is another proof of the fact that Hinduism has never put forward its claim to the monopoly of truth. It is the glory of Hinduism that it never interfered with or discouraged freedom of thought, speculation or opinion, so long as they conformed to the rules of society in matters of external conduct.

### *MAHARAJA'S NEW TANTRISM*

His Highness Shri 1008 Maharajadhiraj Sir Bhupinder Singh Bahadur, Ruler of Patiala State, had thoroughly studied what true Tantrism meant. He had studied this cult only to pervert it to his own purpose. His Highness had a harem of about three hundred women and the Maharaja being an experienced man knew fully well that to keep such a large number of women in his Palace was not an easy matter. His women naturally required sex indulgence. The Maharaja was a man of jealous temperament and the Hindu culture and moral code also demanded that these women should remain strictly faithful to their master. So he thought of converting the old Tantric cult into a new one. He invited the well known spiritual savant and High Priest of Vam Marga (Tantrism) known as Koul by the name of Pandit Prakash Nand Jha, well versed in Tantric cult, from the estate of the Maharaja of Durbhanga in Bengal and with his help started a new form of perverted Tantrism at the Palace.

He used to have religious meetings twice a week in the Moti Bagh Palace in a secluded spacious hall in

the northeast corner of the Palace, to which only those who subscribed to the rules and regulations of the new Tantric cult were admitted after careful scrutiny.

Most of the young women, many of whom were virgins, became members of this religious sect and some of his favourite Aides-de-camp and relatives too were admitted to the fold. But the Maharaja was very careful not to include any senior Maharanis or officials who were intelligent enough to fathom the real purpose of the Maharaja. The membership numbered about 300 to 400 and every meeting was attended by not less than 150 to 200 at a time which consisted of nearly two-third women and one-third men.

The Koul was the spiritual leader and conducted the meetings clad in leopard skin and had his face coloured in red and head shaved excepting a tuft of long hair in the middle of his head. He looked ferocious but serene and dignified. He erected a full size statue of the goddess with mud and sand with his own hands and he used to paint the deity with multi-coloured chalk and bedecked with Royal jewellery, coming straight from the Treasury—precious stones, strings of pearl necklaces, bracelets in diamonds and ear-rings of ruby. The Koul started by asking the audience to sing in praise of the Goddess. When this ceremony was over, wine was served in a most exotic way and after many hours of drinking of the strongest alcoholic mixtures specially prepared for this purpose, he used to ask the virgin girls to come forward and get naked in front of the Goddess and perform the prayers before her in the presence of the congregation. He, on each particular meeting, used to appoint a member of the cult who was to perform the religious ceremonies to preside over the meeting. Invariably, it was the Maharaja who was selected by the High Priest to preside. Havans were performed and the fire was lit in which butter and all kinds of spices and foodgrains such as rice, flour, etc., were thrown.

As the night advanced and the worshippers got intoxicated, the High Priest demanded some of them

to get naked and copulate in front of the Goddess and the devotees. One virgin after another from the harem nursery ranging from the age of 12 to 16 was brought before the Goddess in intoxication. These virgins were brought from hills and other places and were reared in the nursery at the Palace. These virgins grew up in the nursery and when they were mature, they were at the command of their Lord and participated in religious ceremonies before the Goddess. Wine was poured from their necks down to their breasts till it reached their lower region where the Maharaja and other men would put their lips to take a few drops of the liquid considered to be very sacred and purifying to the soul. At the same time some bullocks were slaughtered in front of the Goddess. Blood flowed in the hall where the Goddess was being worshipped.

The High Priest himself went on singing with the chorus of about 150 men and women, completely absorbed in prayers. Men and women collected there were much obsessed with the religious practice of Tantrism and for them the sex problem was not considered to be of much significance, but it formed a part of the religious ceremony. The garb of worship and the intoxication caused by excessive drinking blinded the participants, as the actors and actresses in the drama, to all taboos and restraint.

There were no distinctions at that time between mothers, fathers, sisters and brothers and they were only at that time males and females as this was one of the methods of spiritual uplift. Sexual intercourse in reality was not considered important by itself. This was done to appease the anger of the Goddess who could only be appeased by such atrocious and cruel acts. While men and women were indulging in these orgies, ecstatic singing and dancing continued unabated. The fire blazed with scented wood, specially brought from Mysore which is known for sandalwood.

According to the cult, the creation of a human being was an act of union with religious fervour. Men and women performing sexual intercourse were in reality

acting on the command of God and were thus the personifications of God. The High Priest was commanding the congregation not to procreate and keep full control over themselves as procreation was the last act, in such a spiritual minded gathering.

Every male member of the congregation was trying his utmost to have full control over himself lest he enraged the spiritual leader but those who could not control their sex exuberance were ordered by Koul not to let themselves go, but to pour out the oozing liquid into a cup kept there specially at the feet of the Goddess.

The orgy continued and men and women indulged themselves in such spiritual and religious rituals. All the time the High Priest was evoking the blessing of the Goddess for the Maharaja.

1. Wine, fish, meat, alcohol and sex, these five vices lead to Moksha (salvation) in this present Kaliyug age.
2. Drinks, drinks and drinks again until the worshipper falls on the ground, he gets up and drinks again. After that he becomes immune from rebirth.
3. Koul Marg was a very difficult religion and even difficult for the Yogies to attain perfection in it.

At one time it was the wish of the Maharaja to get elected as the Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes, at another time it was his wish to have a son from a particular Maharani, and sometimes it was his desire to get certain favours from the British Government, and sometimes it was for his health which was already in the process of deterioration that these worships were held. On certain occasions, meetings were held to pray before the Goddess for death punishment for an enemy.

Another strangely disgusting rite, though it did not look strange to those who were participating in

these meetings, was that those who had more liquor than they could stand, were asked to vomit in the cup kept at the feet of the Goddess. This was also considered as a sacred emblem and those participating in the abominable show had to take a sip from that cup as well. In other words, the liquor or sexual indulgence were synonymous to the performance of religious rites and offering to the deity for no material purpose, but it was done to evoke the blessings of the Goddess. These meetings normally lasted the whole night and by the end all the members of the cult were prostrating naked at the feet of the Goddess in spiritual meditation.

It often happened that the High Priest by his black magic made the mud idol of the Goddess come to life and the Goddess was seen showering blessings on those who were gathered there and who were prostrating in front of her. The Maharaja saw the Goddess in human form and talked to her. He prostrated in front of her and sought her blessing for his health, honour, prosperity and success.

The High Priest performed many miracles to the amazement of his disciples. He once or twice asked the Maharaja to have human sacrifice at the feet of the Goddess if he wanted to have full restoration to health. The Maharaja did not agree to this suggestion, but the High Priest, it is alleged, managed through his disciples to have a few human lives sacrificed at the altar of the Goddess secretly in order that the Maharaja's life might be saved. He was sure that by taking the life of a human being, he could put the same life into the body of the Maharaja by which the number of years which the dead body was to live would be given to the Maharaja and his life would be prolonged.

At the end of the meeting, 'Parshad' consisting of he-buffalo, which was slaughtered in front of the Goddess, was distributed and the Hindus who were participating in these meetings took this 'Parshad' voluntarily though normally they had horror of it.

After the day broke, the Koul closed the meeting

and every one dispersed, and the next day no whisper was heard of what had happened on the night before, in this great temple of orgies, sex and blood-soaked deeds.

Subsequently, this new cult spread to the States whose rulers had large harems and this brought solace and satisfaction to those who practised this cult.

## 7 *Cricket and Politics*

**A**BOUT THE YEAR 1929, India first appeared on the world map of cricket and slowly the enthusiasm of the people gathered momentum and India played her first official Test in England.

Lord Hailsham, the then President of the MCC and the Lord Chief Justice of England said humorously in his speech, 'At least in the sphere of cricket, India has been granted Dominion status if nothing else.'

In the beginning, the Maharajas of Kashmir, Patiala, Kapurthala and other States in the North of India started taking keen interest in cricket and inter-state matches were played between various teams.

Maharaja Pratap Singh of Jammu and Kashmir was a real patron of cricket; so were the Maharajas of Patiala and Kapurthala, and they had regular teams for the game.

The Maharaja of Kashmir was a small sized man, almost a dwarf, and he wore huge oversized Kashmiri pagri (head dress) which made him look comic. He used to wear tight trousers with long coat and had large pearl ear-rings in his ears. He was convinced that he was a great batsman and in each and every match played against him, the Maharaja used to score the highest.

Whenever the Maharaja came in to bat, the bowler would bowl his slowest and generally away from the stumps. The Maharaja would touch the ball with his bat and the fielders, instead of fielding properly, would kick the ball till it reached the boundary line, and if the ball was still short of the boundary line, the fielder at the other end would kick it till it covered that point. The Maharaja thus made several boundary hits all along the field. It was indeed comic and amusing to see the Maharaja play cricket.

He had the reputation of being a man of much



wisdom, though he looked a simpleton and even stupid. Lord Curzon, the then Viceroy of India, mentioned in one of his diaries that Maharaja Pratap Singh was 'a mixture of sense and nonsense'. The Maharaja could not detect that the fielders were making fun of him by kicking the ball to reach the boundary or that the ball was not sent straight to hit the wicket. Even when the ball came towards the wicket by mistake the Umpire took good care to call it a 'no ball'. Though the Maharaja himself was a poor batsman, his team consisted of the finest bowlers and batsmen in India at that time.

As the tempo of cricket in India went on increasing the Viceroy of India also started having his own team called the Viceroy's XI.

In 1933, in the time of the Viceroyalty of Earl of Willingdon who was the patron of the Cricket Control Board of India, cricket took a serious turn in the sense that politics were mixed up with cricket.

Bhupinder Singh, Mohinder Bahadur Maharaja Adhiraj of Patiala, was the Vice-Patron of the Cricket Board and Mr. R. E. Grant Govan was elected as the President. The Maharaja of Patiala was the patron and founder of Southern Punjab Cricket Association as well, and he was also a member of Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) a unique honour in those days and being associated intimately from the beginning with the development of cricket in India, he became a prominent figure in the cricket field, much to the envy and jealousy of the Earl of Willingdon and his wife.

Soon the rivalry between the Maharaja and Lord Willingdon started as to who should dominate the Cricket Board of Control. Mr. Grant Govan, President of the Board, was the stooge of the Viceroy and his consort the Countess of Willingdon.

The Viceroy, and particularly Lady Willingdon, wanted Mr. Grant Govan to continue as President, and his own Military Secretary, Major Briton Jones to be at the head of cricket affairs, much to the dislike of the Maharaja of Patiala and the Indian members of the

Board, especially the Nawab Sir Laiquat Hyat Khan, Prime Minister of Patiala, and Dewan Walaiti Ram Secretary Southern Punjab Cricket Association—cricketer of English country fame.

The Maharaja of Patiala by his meritorious services to the Board wielded a powerful influence in the cricket sphere, much to the chagrin of the Viceroy. Because of this jealousy, he began involving the Maharaja in political intrigues and encouraged his Political Advisers to pin-prick the Maharaja in order to lower his prestige.

When Jardine visited India in 1934, the British power was at its zenith, and the British Viceroy would not tolerate a Maharaja to be selected in a British team. Somehow or other the Maharaja through his friends and also on account of his being a member of the Maryle-Bone Cricket Club (MCC) made Jardine, Captain of the British Team, agree to his playing in the team. The Viceroy having heard of it asked Jardine whether it was true that he was going to ask the Maharaja of Patiala to play in his eleven. Jardine replied that he as Captain could include any member belonging to the MCC if he so desired. Lord Willingdon explained to Jardine that the Maharajas were directly under him as the Viceroy and he did not think that a Maharaja should be included in the English Team without his consent. Jardine remained unmoved by the Viceroy's remarks and refused to change his mind.

He then asked his wife to persuade Jardine to change his mind. The Countess of Willingdon who was known for her tactics, diplomacy and intrigue took out Jardine for a stroll into the magnificent and beautiful gardens of her residence and stroking Jardine's arm, she tried to persuade him not to let the Maharaja play in his team. Jardine being a great sportsman did not give in to the Countess and the Maharaja eventually was included in the British Team.

This deepened the rivalry between Lord Willingdon and the Maharaja, culminating in open hostility. The Viceroy's immediate reaction was to involve the Maha-

raja in politically cooked up murder cases. An enquiry was ordered to be conducted by the Agent to the Governor General, Punjab States, Sir James Fitz Patrick. This enquiry was called the "Indictment of Patiala". It went on for several years and before the conclusions were drawn up, the Earl of Willingdon had caused a letter to be addressed to King George who was then the Emperor of India, recommending the dethronement of the Maharaja. An elaborate case was prepared against the Maharaja who was depicted in such black colours that the Emperor would have no hesitation in agreeing to the recommendations of the Viceroy.

The Maharaja, through his secret agents in Delhi, came to know of the plot for his dethronement and visited Delhi to consult his friends as to how he should get hold of the relative official documents so that he could counteract the mischief which the Viceroy was intending to play against him.

A friend of the Maharaja, Mr. J. N. Sahni, a well-known personality in Delhi, knew an Englishman 'XY', officer-in-charge Fire Brigade, who was the lover of Miss 'Z', Personal Assistant to the Viceroy. A sum of Rs. 100,000 was promised to the Englishman to get hold of the file concerning the Maharaja and he in turn approached the personal assistant, Miss 'Z'. She agreed to let out the secret of the Viceroy and hand over the file at 10 p.m. from the Viceroy's House to Mr. 'XY' for a few hours in the night. She accordingly brought the file to the Englishman who in a private taxi brought it to Kashmere Gate where Mr. J. N. Sahni had already collected 12 fast typists and within a few hours a file of 200 pages was typed and before the day broke, the original file was returned to Miss 'Z' and it was put back in the office record. She was given a sum of Rs. 50,000 for this work and a similar amount was retained by Mr. 'XY' for himself. She undertook this precarious job thinking that the gratification received by her was enough for her life time, and that with the change in the office of the Viceroy she would be sent back to

England after completing her term of service with the then Viceroy.

As the term of Lord Willingdon was to expire after about six months, she thought that by staying on in her job, she would not make more than Rs. 50,000 during this short period, whereas she could spend this amount in purchasing a nice house in England and thereafter take up some job with some industrialist or politician in her country.

As soon as the file was replaced by Miss 'Z' in the drawer of Viceroy's private office table, she submitted her resignation, on the plea that her mother was seriously ill in England and she should leave the country immediately. The Viceroy agreed to her request. She merrily sailed from Bombay within forty eight hours and once out of the country she was out of the reach of the law even if the secret was out. She chuckled with delight with the success of her escapade.

Maharaja Bhupinder Singh along with his confidential Ministers and officials was reading the copies of letters typed out from this file in a house nearby as soon as they were typed. Having come to know the draft of the letter prepared by the Viceroy for submission to the Emperor of India and all the contents of the file, he went back to his own capital at 6.30 a.m. and consulted his Prime Minister and his Foreign Minister Sirdar K. M. Panikkar and two other confidential officials as to what steps he should take to forestall the coming evil and the possibility of the King Emperor as the Constitutional Monarch agreeing to the recommendations of the Viceroy.

A letter was drafted with the help of his advisors contradicting and denying the charges levelled against him by the Viceroy. Within a few hours the letter was drafted and ready. Sirdar K. M. Panikkar, Foreign Minister, was specially deputed to go to England to effect delivery of this letter personally to the Emperor. In this letter the Maharaja brushing aside the charges as mere fiction stated that his personal relations with the Viceroy had become strained on account of the fact

that Lady Willingdon had demanded from him a pearl necklace worth 30 lakhs of rupees when she visited his Palace and saw the crown jewels and as the Maharaja refused to agree to such an audacious demand, the Viceroy was enraged and told the Maharaja that he would teach him a lesson by complaining to the Emperor of the maladministration and atrocities committed by him and recommending his dethronement.

This letter was of sixteen pages and contained an indictment of the Viceroy and Countess Willingdon and ingenious arguments were given to show that the Viceroy's charges against the Maharaja were based on his personal enmity consequent on his refusal to part with the necklace. In this letter, the Maharaja further said that Lady Willingdon was a woman of intriguing character and that she was meddling with State affairs for her own personal greed, and in collaboration with her friend, Sir C. P. Ramaswami Ayar, a member of the Viceroy's council, was trying to dethrone him so that he might be removed not only from the throne of Patiala but also from the throne of the Cricket Board, where the Maharaja virtually ruled with the Secretary of the Cricket Control Board, Mr. Anthony De Mello.

In order to strengthen his hands further against the mischief and intrigues of Lord Willingdon, the Viceroy of India, the Maharaja could manage to get invited by the India Government a few members of Parliament from England to find out the real state of affairs not only political but also with regard to the personal relationship of the Viceroy with the ruling princes.

A mission consisting of Major Courtauld, the Honourable Edward Russell and two other members of Parliament came to India. The Maharaja invited them to come to Patiala as his guests. This invitation they accepted. After their visit to Patiala they were taken to a hill resort called Chail in Simla Hills which was the summer capital of the Government of Patiala. There, after grand hospitality shown to them which the guests appreciated, the Maharaja took courage in revealing a plan to them. The Maharaja prepared a list of all the

money which the Earl of Willingdon and Countess of Willingdon had taken from the ruling Princes of India and gave this list to the Mission.

The list was prepared with details giving the names of the rulers and their Ministers who gave huge sums of money to the Viceroy and his consort. Some of the names included the Maharaja of Datia and his Prime Minister Sir Aziz Ahmed, the Maharaja of Gwalior and the Nawab of Rampur and his Prime Minister, Nawabzada Sir Abdul Samad Khan.

The list mentioned the actual amount of money paid to the Viceroy by these Potentates. When the Mission returned to England they gave the list to the Secretary of State for India who forwarded it to the King Emperor. The Mission further reported to the Secretary of State, Sir Samuel Hoare, that the Viceroy and his wife were most unpopular in India and were extracting money by intimidating the Indian Princes.

Sirdar K. M. Panikkar on his arrival in London personally handed over the letter of the Maharaja to the King at an audience arranged through special influence, at the Buckingham Palace in his private study and after the Emperor had read the letter, he was wild with rage and said in a quivering and excited tone that he had already heard many complaints against the Willingdons and that they should not be allowed to continue to stay in India and harass his beloved Maharajas and Chiefs who were loyal to the throne and his person.

The Emperor assured Sirdar K. M. Panikkar that the Maharaja would not be dethroned in any circumstances and that he would not take any notice of the recommendations made by the Viceroy, if received. A telegram of felicitations in code language was sent to the Maharaja by Sirdar K. M. Panikkar. There were great rejoicings in the inner circles of the Maharaja of Patiala where the Maharanis, Ranis and other women of the Harem and trusted friends of the Maharaja had assembled to celebrate the happy occasion and the festival continued till the early hours of the morning.

Lord Willingdon, not knowing what had transpired, sent the letter to the Emperor recommending the dethronement of the Maharaja and as soon as the Emperor read the letter, he called the Secretary of State for India and told him that the letter should be thrown into the waste paper basket and that the Viceroy should be recalled. He shouted in anger that he already knew the cause of this complaint.

After this complaint the Viceroy's position became weak and the Maharaja became bold. He seldom attended the receptions given by the Viceroy and as a matter of fact, he was heard using insulting language to Lady Willingdon to her face on more than one occasion.

Once Lady Willingdon met the Maharaja at a reception given by the Princes of India in Delhi and asked the Maharaja if she could stay in the beautiful romantic pavilion at Pinjore which was interspersed with fountains and an ornamental garden in Mughal style. The Maharaja bluntly told her that the pavilion was not intended to be used by anyone else excepting himself and the other members of the family and that it was the tradition of his house not to allow its use by any foreigner for fear of hurting the religious susceptibility of his Maharanis.

Seeing the success of the crusade which the Maharaja launched against the Viceroy and feeling that his stock in trade had gone down with the King of England, Sir James Fitz Patrick, the Agent of the Governor General, who was entrusted with the enquiry, felt that it would be wise for him to drop the proceedings altogether. He went further and exonerated the Maharaja from all blame and Lady Fitz Patrick received a precious pearl necklace and a diamond ring.

The tour of Jardine's team in India showed how the British wanted to keep their prestige even in cricket. It may be mentioned that when Jardine's team played a match against Viceroy's XI, the tourists had made over 400 runs and were expected to declare next morning. Christie, an ICS official from Uttar Pradesh

who was the Captain of the Viceroy's XI, had the wicket rolled for 20 minutes instead of the normal seven or ten.

When Jardine protested against this, Christie said in his blimpy manner, "Hang it all! In any case, we took it that you were going to declare and as the Viceroy's side would bat, I had the wicket rolled a little longer. Damn it, what does it matter?" Jardine retorted that he would not take his team to the field unless Christie tendered him an unqualified apology.

The Europeans, who were there in great numbers, were enraged and all rushed to Jardine's dressing room to explain that this was a different country to his own. If Indian public ever came to know that this was the attitude of an English Captain towards a Viceroy's XI, British prestige would suffer a terrible setback. But Jardine just said, "Christie must apologise to me in the Viceroy's box, and if he does not, my side won't play." He added that even if the King of England was playing against him, he still would not go to the field unless an apology was tendered, as the wicket had been rolled against the rules of the game. Thereupon, the Viceroy summoned Christie to his box and said, 'My dear fellow, cough it up.'

Another interesting little episode in which Jardine figured happened in the State of Uttar Pradesh. Maharaj-kumar of Vizianagram, a keen cricket enthusiast (known as Vizzy) gave a dinner at Banaras in honour of the Governor, Sir Malcolm Hailey, at which the MCC team were the guests of honour.

After dinner the Military Secretary, another pompous and arrogant official, walked straight to Jardine and said, 'You will be the first to dance with Lady Hailey.' Jardine simply said: 'Oh', but when the band struck, he picked up the nearest good looking face and started dancing. The Military Secretary and the Aide-de-camp drew the attention of the then Collector of Banaras, the late Kunwar Jasbir Singh, and all of them accosted Jardine in the middle of the ballroom during the dance. It was quite a scene as the great English



skipper snapped at them and said, 'I have travelled round the globe, but have never been ordered to dance with anybody. I would have of my own accord danced with the Governor's wife, but would not do so by command.' Sir Malcolm who was a great diplomat realised the difficult situation and started dancing with his wife, as if nothing had happened.

Maharaja Bhupinder Singh's great ambition in life was that his elder son, Yadvindra Singh, should become a first class cricketer, not only as good fielder but also as a batsman and a bowler. He gave him best coaching by appointing famous English and Australian coaches. In spite of the coaching, Yadvindra Singh remained far from blossoming into a first class cricketer.

In order to enthuse the spirit of success in him the Maharaja arranged with Mr. Tarrant, an Australian coach in the service of the Maharaja, that in a match against England at the Brabourne Stadium in Bombay, Yadvindra Singh should be allowed to make plenty of runs and by bowling half volleys the Yuvaraj should hit a few sixers on that particular day. Bhupinder Singh was indisposed and did not come to the club to see the match, but he was listening in his bedroom to the cricket commentary which was relayed from the All India Radio Station. He was surrounded by doctors and nurses and every time Yuvaraj made sixer he applauded in ecstasy. But when the Yuvaraj continued to hit a sixer on each ball, the enthusiasm of the crowd which had gone to the highest pitch began to fade away and the crowd began to suspect that the British Team was in league with the batsman in allowing him to hit boundaries by loose bowling. The Maharaja himself became worried when Yadvindra Singh had hit four sixers successively and he burst aloud and said, "U.V. (as he used to call his son), don't have any more sixers." I was with the Maharaja throughout at that time listening to the radio.

In the match the British bowlers acted in the same way with Yadvindra Singh as the bowlers and fielders used to behave with Pratap Singh, the Maharaja of Kashmir. The ambition of Yadvindra Singh

was to become Captain of the Indian Team which was to visit England the following year. But after this match all his chances of being selected had gone as the crowd was booing and hissing when he was hitting boundaries. The crowd further reacted strongly when the Yuvaraj fielded. There was barracking, whistling, vulgar abuses and tom-tom music whenever Yadvindra Singh fielded the ball.

The Bombay crowd is of a cricket loving people and knows the game. They could not tolerate such unsporting spirit shown by the conspiracy between Yadvindra Singh and the British Team to enable him to score freely by hitting sixers successively. His father seeing the danger involved in the tactics employed by his son sent his confidential friends to the Brabourne Stadium who could control the crowd and who could advise Yadvindra Singh to retire from the field on some pretext or the other.

Yadvindra Singh performed an acrobatic feat while catching a difficult ball on the boundary line and fell down with a ball right up in his right hand. His ankle was dislocated. The crowd which was hostile to him cheered him. The Yuvaraj left the field and did not return during the rest of the match. As a matter of fact this was the last international match at the Brabourne Stadium in which he participated. Thus ended his great ambition to lead India in the Test matches.

## 8 *Conspiracy with Mussolini*

**M**AHARAJA BHUPINDER SINGH, ruler of Patiala, had his first interview with Signor Benito Mussolini at the Palazzo Venezia on 17th April, 1935, at 4.14 p.m. A letter was received by him from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Rome indicating the date and time of the interview with Mussolini.

The Maharaja had an Italian friend in Calcutta by the name of Signor Amedeo Scarpa, Dogli Affari Estori, who was holding the post of Italian Consul General in India. He and the Maharaja had become very great friends and it was through him that the Maharaja had worked up his way to influence Mussolini. Consul General Signor Scarpa reached Rome at the same time as the Maharaja and though the official interview was sought through the British Ambassador, as the Protocol demanded, yet the Italian Consul General had already spoken about the plan of the Maharaja to Mussolini who was anxious to meet the Maharaja and discuss with him the future plan with regard to the help which the Maharaja would give him to conquer India.

Victor Emmanuel, King of Italy, lived in Quirinal Palace. The King generally received his distinguished guests in the hall De Curassier while Mussolini lived in the Palazzo Venezia, the official residence of the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister. The Palace had one official entrance at the front and two private entrances at the back.

Whenever Mussolini invited any of his favourite women for an intimate dinner or supper, a special card was issued to the guest of the night who was allowed to enter by the back door into the private rooms of Mussolini. Mussolini was a very stern and strong willed man not only in politics and administration but also in his love affairs.

He used to command women to come to his bed

in the same way as he used to order Ministers to come in his State rooms. Whenever he had a woman to his private room, *he never* cared to talk to her with courtesy and politeness. Many stories about his love affairs were afloat when we visited Rome and some of them appeared in the newspapers showing the crude manner adopted by Mussolini to command the love of women.

Mussolini's official mistress was Clarette Petacci who was killed with him in Milan. Mussolini's wife, Donna Rachela, seldom appeared in public nor did she live with him at Palazzo Venezia.

His daughter Edda was married in April 1930 to Count Ciano, a handsome looking man, and the Maharaja of Kapurthala and I were present at their wedding, at the special invitation of Mussolini.

Count Ciano was appointed Foreign Minister of the Italian Government and held that position for many years. He was afterwards executed by the orders of Mussolini as he was accused of being a traitor to the Government and to the person of Mussolini.

Maharaja Bhupinder Singh of Patiala was received at the entrance of Palazzo Venezia by the Chief of Protocol and was conducted from one room to another. The Chief of Protocol kept the Maharaja and myself busy with light conversation while the Italian Consul General Signor Scarpa was rushing to and fro to expedite the time of interview. Mussolini was punctual to a minute to receive the Maharaja. The Maharaja and I passed through several big spacious rooms before we reached the hall of audience where Mussolini was sitting serenely on a high chair at the far end of the room with only two chairs in front of him.

He was closely watched. There were several apertures in the big hall through which his Military Guards were peeping in with loaded guns in case the interviewers attacked him. To ordinary visitors these rifles looked as if they were meant for ornamental purposes, but minute observation would disclose that they were held by Military Guards as utility weapons. Mussolini did not get up from his table while we were

crossing the big hall, but as the Maharaja and I were within a yard from his table, he stood up and shook hands with the Maharaja and myself and the conversation started.

Mussolini spoke in Italian which was translated by the interpreter into English, while the Maharaja spoke in English which the interpreter translated into Italian.

But when Mussolini received Maharaja Jagatjit Singh of Kapurthala in 1930 he spoke in French and on that occasion no interpreter was present at the interview. The conversation was all in French as the Maharaja and I could understand and speak French well.

Besides, owing to the seriousness of the talks which the Maharaja of Patiala had with Mussolini, he preferred to have his own interpreter. The first interview lasted for 45 minutes in which the Maharaja revealed his plans to the great satisfaction of Mussolini and this interview was followed by subsequent interviews which were not arranged through diplomatic channel against the conventions of the Protocol and the Maharaja used to go to the Palazza Venezia without any formalities and conventions.

The Maharaja told Mussolini that if El Duce invaded India, his services would be at his disposal. Mussolini had already conquered Ethiopia and the Emperor Haile Selassie was in exile in Paris where the Maharaja used to meet him.

It was Mussolini's great ambition in life to go further East after having made himself Emperor of Ethiopia and he had made up his mind to conquer India with the help of the Maharaja who painted to him a very rosy picture and told him that he had a following of three million Sikhs and a greater number of followers of other religions in all parts of India. The Maharaja also told Mussolini that being the Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes all the Maharajas of India were at his beck and call. At the slightest hint from him as their Chancellor, these Maharajas would revolt against the British, and with the political agitation already going on in India against the British it would be an easy

task for Mussolini to conquer India.

Mussolini was earnestly desirous of carrying out his plan with the help of the Maharaja and met him again and again to finalise schemes for the conquest of India. Mussolini promised the Maharaja that he would be crowned as the King of India.

Dreams of the conquest of India must have remained in the head of El Duce till the end of his life. He wanted to conquer India not only for the sake of extending his Empire but also for improving the economic position of his country.

After the Maharaja had six interviews with Mussolini, the suspicion of the British Ambassador arose. One day the British Ambassador came to see the Maharaja at the Hotel Excelsior where he was staying and informed him that no further interview by the Maharaja with Mussolini would be tolerated by the British Government, and that if the Maharaja persisted in seeing Mussolini, the Ambassador would be compelled to report the matter to the King Emperor. After that warning the Maharaja made up his mind to leave Rome and the plans which were hatched between Mussolini and the Maharaja to conquer India with the help of the Sikhs in the North of India were held in abeyance.

The Maharaja told Mussolini at the last interview that he would come again to see him on his way back to India as he had to leave suddenly for London for the Silver Jubilee of His Majesty King George VI of England to which he was officially invited. The Maharaja told Mussolini further that he would continue his talks on his return from London. Though the Maharaja left Rome suddenly, the Italian Consul General, Mr. Scarpa, followed him to London and held further discussion there with the Maharaja with regard to the execution of the plan for the projected invasion of India by Mussolini. However, on the advice of King George VI the Maharaja had to leave for India and before his departure to India, the Maharaja sent a letter to Mussolini.

The Maharaja had similar talks with Adolf Hitler

and General Goering whom he visited in Berlin. The Maharaja sent a wire to Hitler, a copy of which is given below :

Naples, 27th Sep. 1935

Your Excellency,

Before leaving the shores of Europe today I wish to thank Your Excellency most warmly for the great cordiality and kindness which Your Excellency and the German Government showed me during my stay in Germany.

I will always recall to myself with real pleasure the most interesting conversation that I had the privilege to have with Your Excellency in Berlin.

I am delighted to receive your autographed photograph which Your Excellency so kindly sent to me. I will treasure it as a precious souvenir of Your Excellency.

With highest esteem.

Yours sincerely,  
Bhupinder Singh.

To see Mussolini in his official life was quite different from seeing him in his private life. Once Mussolini was seen by me at a seaside place swimming in his blue bathing suit. He looked colossal fat and grotesque in that swimming costume and played with water like a child. There were no restrictions for people to bathe on that particular spot though the Military and Police guards were not far away from this place to guard Mussolini. Many criminal investigation department men were present in ordinary clothes. This was not a proper beach and therefore only a few men and women were bathing in that particular seaside place.

At the height of his glory, Mussolini's prestige was very high and he was so much feared that it was impossible to mention his name in the streets, hotels or even in parks. Once I asked my guide to let me know how Mussolini captured power. He kept silent and looked troubled at the question which was asked by me in the middle of a large park where no one was hear-

ing and no one was even 50 yards away from the place. Mussolini had created terror and fear in the hearts of the people. A lot of stories about his pomp and show and peculiar arrogant disposition were heard in Rome.

Mussolini's son-in-law, Count Ciano, Foreign Minister of the Government of Italy invited me for a Drink at the bar of Excelsior Hotel where the Maharaja and I were staying and narrated to me an interesting joke. The King invited Mussolini, he and his wife Countess Ciano a few days back to play contract bridge. After bidding by him, the King, Mussolini and Countess Ciano several times, the King said Six Hearts, Mussolini went up to Six Spades and the King called Seven Hearts. Mussolini was feeling furious that the King could overbid him. He suddenly became indignant and felt much annoyed at the King calling 'Seven Hearts' and when his turn for bidding came, Mussolini banged the table and again repeated 'Six Spades'. The King said 'Pass'. Count Ciano and his wife also said 'Pass'. Mussolini won the game and the rubber.



## 9 Audience with Mussolini

**T**HE TALKS WHICH Maharaja Jagatjit Singh of Kapurthala had with Mussolini were of a personal and social character. After a few minutes conversation with Mussolini about the glorious rise of Italy and the great part El Duce played in the reconstruction of his country by carving a big Italian Empire, the Maharaja asked Mussolini, "Your Excellency, what is your hobby and pastime after Your Excellency finishes your daily routine of State affairs?" Mussolini replied sternly, "Your Highness, my hobby is to dismiss and appoint Ministers. I rejoice seeing the names of the dismissed Ministers in the official gazette and newspapers in the morning." After this reply, though the Maharaja tried to prolong the conversation, Mussolini's face became red and swollen. He got up and said, "Good Bye", politely to the Maharaja and myself and also uttered a few more words which could not be understood but it conveyed the impression that it struck him at that time to dismiss some particular Ministers who had incurred his displeasure in some way or other. Next morning it was mentioned in the newspapers that Mussolini had dismissed two of his favourite Ministers.

The Maharaja of Kapurthala and myself returned by the same route as we went in. Until we crossed the hall, Mossolini stood erect in black shirt uniform with breeches and cap. Before leaving the hall of audience we turned back and bowed to Mussolini and he gave a military salute.

## 10 *British Minister at Patiala*

**H**IS HIGHNESS MAHARAJA Bhupinder Singh, Ruler of Patiala, his Ministers and the senior officials of the Government of Patiala had no time for work, as most of their time was taken up in attending shooting parties, birthdays and other functions arranged for the pleasure of the Maharaja. Field trials were also arranged which occupied the whole day and lasted for two to three weeks.

These trials were arranged both at Patiala and the capitals of the neighbouring States — Nabha, Sangrur and Faridkot. The occasions were marked by much festivity. Competitors indulged in partridge shooting and trained dogs were employed to bring the birds in after the shoot. Prizes were awarded on the basis of the time taken by a dog between the gun was fired and the birds were brought by the competing dogs.

Points were given for the manner in which the birds were gathered by the dogs in their mouth without the use of teeth or by the grip of their teeth. Various other points of distinction had to be counted regarding the manner in which the dogs brought the birds. There was acute rivalry amongst the Maharajas of neighbouring States — Nabha, Jind and Faridkot — over this game and whoever won the championship of the Meet was awarded shields and cups of gold and silver.

Whenever the Maharaja of Patiala walked from from one field to another while competing for the trophies, his Prime Minister, Ministers and other officials, if they had some important case to discuss with the Maharaja, they did so on the spot. The officials had to be very careful not to disturb the Maharaja in his pastime or put him off at a psychological moment as it would result in his wrath descending upon them.

The Maharanis used to travel in veiled howdahs, a

sort of wooden gilded box with transparent curtains fastened to the sides and provided with chairs or cushioned seats. Sometimes the Maharanis sat on the chairs and sometimes they squatted on the velvet cushions with legs crossed or stretched long. They were always two or three women on each elephant with an aide-de-camp armed with a loaded gun to guard the princesses. Mahaut, the conductor of the elephant, controlled the animal with a sharp iron weapon held away from the sight of the occupants. He dared not look back towards the princesses, though occasionally he could not avoid doing so, as the animal needed chastisement in some way. The Maharanis and other women followed the field trials on elephants. Hundreds of trucks and cars used to follow the trials, when the competitors were crossing from one field to another. There were about 12 to 15 places reserved for the guests competing in the game. Food arrangements were made for over one thousand guests who lunched and dined there and also had afternoon teas. Alcoholic drinks were served before dinner at the camp. On return the guests were entertained at the Moti Bagh Palace to music and dance which continued the whole night. Most of the Court dancing girls, numbering about one hundred, entertained the guests with their songs and company.

Gaiety and sport continued at regular intervals during the year while administrative machinery of the State came to a stand still. The officers and the State Secretariat opened at 10 a.m. in Winter and 8 a.m. in Summer months, but during the field trials only the junior officials and clerks attended the office and they sat there the whole day long idling about without conducting any business of the State.

The work of administration used to be in arrears so much so that conscientious Ministers and officials had to work at home till early hours of the morning to cope with the work left over. In the case of those who were physically incapable of bearing much strain or those who were not conscientious workers, files ac-

cummulated in hundreds and thousands without properly being dealt with or any orders being passed on them.

It was worse with the Maharaja, who was the executive Head of the Government and without whose orders no business could be conducted. The British Resident, as the representative of the Paramount Power, seeing this collapse of administration, advised the Maharaja to take more interest in his official work or let the Viceroy depute a British Finance Minister to take care of the finances of the State. Ever since his talk with the Resident, the Maharaja began to take more interest outwardly, to hoodwink the British Resident, but there was no improvement in the financial position of the State Exchequer. Then the Viceroy of India appointed Sir Frederick Gauntlet as Finance Minister of the State.

The Maharaja refused to see Sir Frederick Gauntlet for months. He was summoned to the Palace every day at ten o'clock in winter months and eight o'clock in summer months for transacting official business and he would leave in despair at night. The Maharaja could find no time to see him. In the meantime Sir Frederick Gauntlet was being entertained sumptuously with plenty of whisky and soda which was a favourite drink of the English people. In the first few days he felt wild with anger but after some time got used to that way of life. He enjoyed bridge and managed to collect every morning three players amongst his colleagues in the government who were meeting the same fate as himself. Months passed by in this manner.

Sir Frederick, though enjoying the game of bridge, at times was foaming with rage, as the Maharaja would not receive him for work. He adopted the practice of sending all files in advance to the Palace for personal discussion with the Maharaja. After the lapse of months the Maharaja called some of his confidential and trusted officials and asked them to go through the files and after oral discussions with them he dictated his final orders on them. After this was done the

Maharaja called Sir Frederick Gauntlet to his study and offered him a glass of whisky which he bluntly said, "I cannot take whisky with Your Highness unless you pass orders on the files which are lying with you for the last six months." The Maharaja then told him that he had been busy going through the files and he had passed the necessary orders on them and there was no further use of any personal discussion with him. Sir Frederick Gauntlet looked at some of the files and was amazed to see that the Maharaja was working day and night in disposing of the files. He apologised to the Maharaja for having misjudged his capacity for work and started taking one glass after another of whisky with the Maharaja.

After some time Sir Frederick Gauntlet wrote a letter to the Viceroy that the Maharaja was the most hard working and capable ruler that the Indian States would ever produce!

## II     *A Saint from Banaras*

**A** NAKED FAKIR from Rishikesh, a sacred place in the Himalayas, came to the Motibagh Palace when Maharaja Bhupinder Singh of Patala was almost dying of heart trouble. The Fakir was clad in a leopard skin and had long dusty hair tied up, like a pyramid, with bare legs and sat uninvited on the bed of the Maharaja and whispered a few words to him which were inaudible to anyone else around. Thereafter, suddenly he came out of the Palace and disappeared.

The Maharaja immediately called me and Pandit Ram Prashad, the Palace Physician, and confided in us that the Fakir who had come from Rishikesh told him that he would be cured if he got the blessings of the great Saint in Banaras. But he left no name or address where to find him.

The Maharaja appointed a Committee under my Chairmanship consisting of myself, the Royal Physician Pandit Ram Parshad, Mr. Arjan Parshad Bansal and Colonel Narain Singh to go and locate the Saint in Banaras and bring him to Patiala for his blessings and treatment.

The Maharaja was so much obsessed with the idea of calling the Saint that he asked Raj Vaid and myself to go to Banaras immediately. For this purpose he placed sufficient funds at our disposal. The mission reached Banaras with several members of the retinue and with the help of the Maharaja of Banaras and his Prime Minister, we started a hunt for the Saint. There are numerous temples at Banaras dedicated to innumerable Hindu deities.

This city is the chief repository of religious learning. One's eye is attracted by the view of two lofty minarets which were erected by Aurangzeb, the last Moghul emperor, on the foundations of an ancient temple dedicated to Maha Devi. The streets are so

narrow that cars or horse-carriages cannot cross each other at one time.

The Maharaja of Banaras placed at our disposal the famous Nandesar Palace reserved for Viceroys, British Governors, Ruling Princes of India and other distinguished guests. The great problem for us was how to locate the Saint. For weeks Raj Vaid and I went around the city visiting burning ghats, used for cremating dead bodies and other secluded and remote places where the saints usually lived. He could be one of the thousands of saints living in Banaras. He may be clad in normal clothes or he may be dressed like a saint or he may even be naked. Such thoughts were occupying the attention of the Committee.

All the well-known saints and Sadhus were talked to by us but no clue could be found of the real Saint.

One day, by chance, the Raj Vaid had a vision when taking his bath in the sacred river Ganges and praying not only for the purification of his own soul but also for the discovery of the real Saint, so that his and my name may not be discredited by our failure in the mission entrusted to us. It so happened that within a few minutes the Raj Vaid and I and two other members of the Committee happened to go to a two-storeyed house about 100 yards away, and we went up to the second floor of the house where a very fat and naked man was squatting on the ground all alone.

Immediately, on seeing the Raj Vaid and myself, he shouted, "I can save your Maharaja, I know where you have come from".

On hearing this we were astonished and began to whisper in each other's ears and were convinced that this was the real Saint whom we were searching, as the Saint knew about the purpose of our visit before we spoke to him. We all fell at his feet in reverence and asked him how he knew the object of our visit. He did not reply but he swelled his body, particularly his big belly, very much round like a football. He asked us to pierce his stomach with swords which were lying nearby in order to show that we could not do so even with such

a weapon. He also told us that if we wanted to stay longer, he would fly to the Himalayas to meet Guru Gorakhnath and bring the message from him about the recovery of the Maharaja.

We were not anxious to have any miracle performed at this stage as we had made up our mind to take the Saint to the Maharaja. We wanted him to show his feats to the Maharaja, so that he might be convinced about the healing power of the Saint. A telegram was sent to the Maharaja that His Holiness the Saint was discovered and that he would be brought to the Palace, the next day by a fast train. The telegram was answered by the Maharaja immediately. Many telephonic messages were exchanged between the Maharaja and myself for arranging the details of the visit.

Ordinarily, four compartments in the train were sufficient to carry 16 passengers including the members of the Committee, but seven compartments were reserved for the whole party. The extra compartment was for the use of the Saint who refused to share it with any other member of the party and insisted that in addition he wanted two compartments for his followers consisting of six men, two of whom were absolutely naked, while the other four were scantily dressed. The train was delayed by a few hours at the start on account of the great rush of people at the station to see the wonderful Saint. The Maharaja had further instructed that a special train should be requisitioned to cause no delay to the party in reaching his Capital. The special train carrying the Saint and all of us was received at the station by the Prime Minister along with other Ministers and Yuvraj (Crown Prince), his brothers and other members of the Royal family. A guard of honour was presented and the Saint was taken straight away to the Palace in a Rolls Royce car.

The Maharaja, though seriously ill, was allowed to talk to his visitor. His mental powers were intact though his physical stamina had deteriorated sufficiently. After I had a talk with the Maharaja about the Saint, he ordered that one of the buildings inside the main



Palace should be vacated by the Maharanis and placed at the disposal of the Saint and his retinue. The Saint was ordered to be treated as the most distinguished guest. When he was taken to his appointed residence, he said, "I am not accustomed to living in Palaces nor would I stay in such places. I am a recluse and wish to remain in an humble hut outside the town."

This message was conveyed to the Maharaja who ordered the locating of the most suitable place outside the capital in accordance with the wishes of the Saint. He was then taken round to see the various places in and outside the town. Ultimately, he approved of a two-storyed dilapidated house near the race course.

The ground floor of this building consisted of one large hall measuring 30 ft. by 20 ft. communicating with a small room which was formerly used for a bath, and a spacious veranda on both sides for the hall. Similar accommodation existed on the first floor. This house was uninhabited for several years. The Saint said that he would live there during his stay in the capital and that he was not to be disturbed by anyone unless he wanted to see someone particularly. The Saint and his retinue were lodged in this house with their scanty luggage, which consisted of one or two sheets, a couple of loin cloths, leopard skins and a small bundle of wearing apparel. The Maharaja was very anxious to know why the Saint had preferred to stay in such a dilapidated house. It was explained to him that the Saint did not care to live in a luxurious style, and the Maharaja was then satisfied that the Saint's preference for an humble abode was not due to any dissatisfaction or discourtesy shown to the Saint by his staff, but it was due to his simple way of living.

The Saint started to prepare for the treatment of the Maharaja, who was asked to come and pay him the first visit at six in the evening. This was winter season and the sunset time was generally before 6 p.m. There was no light in this house and the Saint detested electric or any artificial light. He preferred instead an oil

lamp as he wished to be as simple as possible.

On receiving the message, the Maharaja informed all his Maharanis and Ranis to be ready for the visit to the Saint in order to get his blessings for recovery. I arranged a big procession of motor cars in which the Maharaja and the principal ladies of the Palace were accommodated and proceeded to the Saint's house. The Maharaja and the Maharanis numbering about forty brought presents in cash and kind for the Saint. These consisted of cash, varying from Rs. 500 to Rs. 10,000 in accordance with the respective position and status of the Maharanis and Ranis while the Maharaja asked the Officer of the Privy Purse to take with him Rs. 1,21,000 for presentation to the Saint. According to previous arrangement, the Saint was to receive the Maharaja first and others afterwards.

Accordingly, the Maharaja was ushered in the presence of the Saint and made to sit on the floor opposite the Saint on a leopard skin. The Saint stretched out his hand and put it on the head of the Maharaja and said that after an hour or so he would go and see Guru Gorakhnath and bring his blessings for the Maharaja, who would be able to listen to the talk he would have with the Guru with the help of an interpreter, his disciple. The Maharaja felt gratified at the assurance given by the Saint. After the Maharaja paid his respects, he asked the Saint for permission to allow the Maharanis and other women in the court to be presented to him. He asked them to sit on the floor which had no carpet or mattress. The Maharaja was the only person who sat on the leopard skin. The Maharanis and other ladies of the Court, the Raj Vaid and I and others sat on the bare floor with folded hands while the members of the staff remained outside on the veranda which was large enough to accommodate sixty or seventy people. After the meeting was over and the offerings were presented to the Saint by the Maharaja and the members of the family which came to several lakhs of rupees, ornaments and priceless jewellery, clothes and dresses of all kinds, both for men and women, the

Saint looked at the Maharaja and said, "How do you expect me to accept all these presents when I have renounced the world. I have no desire to have any jewels or dresses, nor any gold or silver. These should be immediately distributed among the poor of the town and that would give me more satisfaction than if I kept these jewels and money for myself."

The Maharaja was now convinced more than ever about the capability and spiritual powers of the Saint and agreed to the fulfilment of his wishes. The presents offered were then taken back to the Palace treasury where they were distributed to the poor, in accordance with the wishes of the Saint. After a few minutes' talk with the Maharaja, the Saint asked one of his disciples to get the Maharaja and the whole gathering away from the main hall. He directed them to go out on the terrace while he would pray for the recovery of the Maharaja. He would also go beyond the Himalayas to see his Guru and bring his blessings for the Maharaja's recovery. He sat on the leopard skin all alone in that room with his face covered with a turban which made it slightly visible. He spread his arms right and left and squatted on the floor with his left leg on top of the other like a Yogi. This position is generally adopted when someone wants to place himself in communion with God through meditation. All openings like mouth, ears, eyes, nostrils and rectum are closed in this pose by both hands and feet, so that no outside element should disturb the soul which is in unison with the Supreme Being.

One of his disciples was near the Maharaja and another disciple was with the group of Maharanis and another disciple somewhere else to explain to the gathering the miracle the Saint was about to perform.

The Maharaja was very anxious to know what process was being adopted for his recovery. The doctors had given up all hope of his recovery in spite of the fact that the best medical aid from Europe and other countries was available to him. There were kerosene lamps burning in each corner of the room and we could

see the Saint squatting and meditating in that dim light. A few minutes later, there came out a tremendous noise from the nostrils of the Saint which resembled the reverberating sound of an aeroplane while taking off from the landing strip. The disciple sitting by the side of the Maharaja and Maharanis told them that the Saint, after his meditation, was going up to the Himalayas. Again after two or three minutes they said, "Look! there, the saint is flying".

The Saint had gone up about a yard from the ground along with his leopard skin and was seen suspected half way between the roof and the ground. Seeing this, the Maharaja and other people began to tremble with excitement and engaged themselves in deep meditation and prayers. Again different types of noises began to be heard, sometimes like the barking of a dog or the roar of a tiger, and sometimes soft like the lapping of sea waves while at another time the noise like a volcanic eruption.

After twenty minutes or so, the Saint was no more visible in the room and it was said that he had now gone over and flown to the Himalayas and was in touch with Guru Gorakhnath. Conversation between the said Guru and the Saint was most interesting. The Saint told the Guru on arrival somewhere thousands of miles away from the highest Himalayan peaks, "Oh Lord, I have come to pay my respects to you, Emperor of the World, and also to seek your blessings for the Maharaja who has been helping the poor and is a protector of the faithful." The Guru replied, "Ochru, your wish shall be fulfilled; go back and tell the Maharaja that he will be cured".

This conversation was taking place between the Saint and Guru Gorakhnath. Their voices were coming from a distance and it looked as if they came from miles away. The Maharaja and the Maharanis and other women were now kneeling on the floor in deep meditation and thanking God for the great mercy shown to the Maharaja. After a few minutes, the same weird noises were heard as before and then the Saint was

seen to descend slowly to the ground, emerging like an aeroplane from the sky. As soon as he arrived in the room, the disciples told the Maharaja to go and pay respects to His Holiness. The Maharaja kissed the feet of the Saint in great reverence. After this, the Maharaja and his party left for the Palace.

The Raj Vaid and I were given the highest honours and gifts in the shape of land and houses, for our meritorious services.

Some time afterwards it was discovered from a note in the daily Police diary recorded by the Inspector General of the Criminal Investigation Department who was watching the activities of the Saint very minutely that on one side of the room there was a door opening to the small room mentioned above and formerly used as a bath room. The Inspector General of Police stayed in a corner of the room where he could have full view of the Saint where the light was sufficient to give him a vivid picture of the Saint and his so called flight to the Himalayas.

The Saint with the help of his disciples managed this miracle in such a clever manner that only the eye of the Inspector General of Police could detect the feat. The Saint had two pairs of hands and arms from a dead body and turbaned dummy attached to a sheet of cloth. The two hands were projecting out of the cloth and in reality there was no difference between the actual hands and arms of the Saint and of the hands of the dead body and between the headgear of the Saint and that of the turbaned dummy.

It being dark, one could not see distinctly. The visitors who had come there were so imbued with religious and spiritual fervour that they could not apparently perceive what was actually happening behind the scene. The Saint after making some peculiar noises for which he was fully trained left for the second room in darkness and the dummy which was hanging on the room was let down by a special mechanical contrivance and remained on the floor. The Saint was shouting from the adjacent floor and he could imitate all kinds of

animal noises like the barking of dog, roaring of lions, tigers, noises resembling that of the propellers of an aeroplane when it takes to the air. He went on using all his skill to convince the audience which was spell-bound that he had flown to a certain height and was speaking from a long distance.

In the meantime he had arranged through a pulley unknown to anyone, excepting the few disciples, by which the dummy could be pulled up slowly. The dummy supposed to be the Saint himself was thus pulled from the ground to the roof. As soon as the dummy reached the roof it was so well arranged that the dummy collapsed and because a part and parcel of the roof and so it was invisible to the eye. The same contrivance was used to bring the dummy back to the floor. As soon as the performance was over, the Saint would come and sit on the leopard skin and the dummy was moved away by one of the disciples.

As one of the disciples came to know that the whole plot was discovered by the Inspector General of Police and the consequences of it may be very disastrous for all concerned, the Saint along with the other members of his retinue left hurriedly at about two o'clock in the night without giving any notice of his departure to the Maharaja or myself. Early in the morning it was reported to the Maharaja that the Saint had disappeared and was not to be seen anywhere in the city or nearby. The Maharaja remarked that since he had talked to Guru Gorakhnath and he had given his blessings, the Saint after completing his mission had departed, rather unceremoniously, for an unknown destination. All the same, the Maharaja was anxious to know as to why the Saint had made his exit in such mysterious circumstances.

The Maharaja died the same evening.

## 12 *Interview with George V*

**M**AHARAJA BHUPINDER SINGH of Patiala was invited by King George V for his Silver Jubilee celebrations in London. Though as a Royal guest he was expected to stay at the Buckingham Palace, yet he preferred to put up at the Savoy Hotel, with his numerous Maharanis and other women of the Court and about 60 officers and attendants. He used to attend the official functions but invariably returned to the Hotel at night to be with his favourite consorts. He was a picturesque sight while he was in one of the King's coaches, in his official State dress with jewellery and decorations, driven by six grey horses while going to St. Paul's Cathedral. He was applauded throughout the route from Buckingham Palace to the Cathedral by the multiple crowd which gathered along the roads. The Maharaja was also greeted by the cream of London society and foreign diplomats.

The Maharaja expressed a desire to see King George V. Time was fixed in the morning at 11. The Maharaja was irritated by the protocol which he did not find to his taste. Though the time for interview was fixed at 11 a.m. the Maharaja was still in his sleeping dress until that hour. His beard was hanging loose which was usual at the time of going to bed, and it had to be combed and brushed properly by an attendant before he could put on the customary dress and regalia for the occasion. This operation could easily last for an hour and a half before he could be ready to go out. In spite of my request the Maharaja was intentionally delaying the time for his interview with the King. He abused every one who came near him to remind him of the appointment. In the meantime, a message came from the Buckingham Palace that the King was waiting for the Maharaja for his audience. The Private Secretary to His Majesty, Sir Clive Wigram, was furious that the Maharaja was

late and so was the King at such unpunctuality. Instead of getting ready for the interview he started playing cards with his favourite Maharanis Vimla Wati, Jashodha Devi, Rewti Devi and Rupwant Devi and would not listen to any one and did not care for the entreaties of his staff, who advised him not to incur the displeasure of His Imperial Majesty, the King Emperor, so wantonly. After several telephone calls had been received, the Maharaja eventually started getting ready and reached the Palace about an hour and a half later than the fixed time for the interview. It was about 12.30 p.m. when he entered the outer precincts of the Palace. The Lord Chamberlain and Sir Clive Wigram were waiting for the Maharaja at the porch and they looked very much annoyed at this exhibition of discourtesy by the Maharaja and showed it by not putting out their hands for shaking hands with the Maharaja. The Maharaja was accompanied by Colonel Narain Singh, his Palace Physician, and myself. It was unusual for a doctor to escort the Maharaja at a formal function, but he insisted on taking him along instead of an Aid-de-Camp of the rank of a General.

The Maharaja was conducted to the audience room of the King who was foaming with rage, but before the King could say anything, Colonel Narain Singh told His Majesty that the Maharaja had an attack of Thrombosis and he might have passed out on the way, or might even pass out any time in the presence of His Majesty. The Maharaja pretended that he was really ill and could hardly walk which was evident from the fact that the doctor was holding the arm of the Maharaja all the time to give him the necessary support. Hearing this state of affairs most unexpectedly, the King was visibly moved and became most sympathetic towards the Maharaja forgetting all the annoyance he had felt a little while ago.

His Majesty said that the Maharaja was really his great admirer and loyal to his Throne and Person for having risked his life by coming all the way from his residence to keep up the appointment even though he



was late for an hour and a half. The Maharaja explained to the King that he could not resist the temptation and the honour of meeting the King while caring for his life which was in danger of being snapped any time. Immediately afterwards the King took the Maharaja by the arm and placed him comfortably on the sofa. He called the Queen and the Prince of Wales and told them of the great loyalty of the Maharaja and the devotion he had for the Throne. The doctor, in the meanwhile, in the presence of the distinguished Royal company, gave an injection to the Maharaja to stimulate the heart; thus the Maharaja revived and became normal. The King invited the Maharaja to stay on for lunch.

### 13 *Last Moments of the Grand Maharaja*

MAHARAJA SIR BHUPINDER SINGH of Patiala was the descendent of Maharaja Ala Singh. The founder of the family had collected great booty including historic diamonds and other rare jewellery. He had carved a big State for himself and founded the dynasty.

Maharaja Bhupinder Singh was a man of versatile ability and collected around him most eminent Ministers and officials. The ablest Statesmen were chosen as Ministers from all parts of India and they were greatly devoted to him throughout his life.

Sirdar K. M. Panikkar, Free India's distinguished Ambassador to China, Egypt and France, was his trusted Foreign Minister. Colonel Ragbhir Singh, former Chief Minister of PEPSU Government was also a member of Patiala Government Cabinet, in charge of the portfolio of Home Affairs. Nawab Liaquat Hyat Khan was the Prime Minister of Patiala State for many years. The portfolio of law was in hands of an able and distinguished lawyer from Allahabad, Mr. M. N. Raina, and his trusted Minister was myself and I held the portfolio of Agriculture, Industries and Forests, Minister-in-waiting and in charge of Maharaja's health. There were many other able men selected by him to help in the administration of the State.

Maharaja Bhupinder Singh's father, Maharaja Sir Rajinder Singh CCS, died at an early age of 28 being addicted to alcohol, and his advisors were very careful that Maharaja Bhupinder Singh should not become an addict to alcohol in the same way as were his father and grandfather. He was brought up by an English tutor. Hindu and Sikh tutors also attended on him and at the age of 18 he was a versatile man.

As he grew up, the courtiers around him wanted to give him the taste of women and wine, but the Maharaja kept himself aloof from all these temptations.

Since it paid the courtiers to corrupt him, soon the Maharaja fell a prey to their designs.

The villains of the court went on tempting him with young women and as a man he could not resist such allurements. These women were brought from different parts of India and were selected for their exquisite beauty and tender age. When he died he had about 332 women in his harem. Out of them there were only ten who were recognised as Maharanis while about fifty of them were called Ranis and the others were only mistresses and servants. All of them were at the beck and call of the Maharaja. He could satisfy his sexual lust with any of them at any time of the day or night.

Minor girls were brought to the Palace and kept there till they attained puberty. They were trained in a way that he liked. In the beginning of their life in the Palace, these girls were well cared for. They were asked to present cigarettes, wine, etc. or do some odd work only for the Maharaja. The Maharaja fondled them and kissed them. In the first instance these girls were only servants but as they began to be liked by the Maharaja their status went up, step by step, till they reached the higher status and were declared Maharanis. The Maharaja used to write to the Government of India whenever he selected a woman to be his Maharani for recognition and that particular woman was accepted by the Government of India as a Maharani. Any issue from her was to be considered the legitimate son of the Maharaja and entitled to the rights and privileges due to a Prince or Princess of the Royal blood.

There were other distinctions also between the Maharanis and mistresses. The Maharanis were served dinner, lunch and tea in gold plates and gold bowls and the dishes numbered in the neighbourhood of one hundred consisting of a variety of pulaos, of curries, meat and fish dishes and puddings etc., while the Ranis were served in silver plates and cups and the number of dishes was only fifty. In the case of other women who were aspiring to attain higher status one day, they were served in brass plates and cups. The number of

their dishes did not amount to more than twenty. The Maharaja himself was served in gold plates studded with precious stones and gems and the number of dishes served to him was never less than 150.

On grand occasions like birthdays of the Maharaja, the Maharanis, and Princes or Princesses, banquets were held. The table was laid for two hundred and seventy five or three hundred and the male members, sitting on the table were only the Maharaja, his sons, sons-in-law and a few special invitees while on the women's side were the Maharanis and a few select women of the Palace. The banquet was served by Italian, Indian and English waiters and butlers, and the quality of food and wines was exquisite. Courses were brought one after another on big plates which were piled up to the top till they reached the level of the mouth of those who were participating in the dinner. Sometimes there were rows of 10 to 20 plates. At the end of the banquet there was usually a musical party where dancing girls from different States were brought to entertain the Maharaja, his harem and the guests. Such parties ended in the early hours of the morning when all of them were intoxicated with wine and liquor. This continued for many years. There were also beautiful women, brought from Europe and Nepal in the Himalayas and Cyprus Islands, who were residing in the Palace. Women were dressed in such gorgeous clothes and jewellery as could not be seen in any part of the world. The jewellery and cloth could match even those worn by the Princesses of England and cinema stars of Hollywood and the aristocracy of France. At the end of the banquet the Maharaja took away from the group of women a few whom he liked the best on that particular evening and retired to his own Palace with them to the envy and jealousy of other women of the harem.

For attracting the attention of the Maharaja these women had many devices. The Maharaja had a soft corner for all of them. They used to inform the doctors of their ailments who visited them daily about their health. Before this could be explained it will be better to des-

cribe the method which the doctors adopted while visiting the patients every morning at the Palaces.

There were French, Indian and English doctors attending on the Maharaja and the women at the Palace. When some of the women were pining to see the Maharaja, they used to pretend that they were constipated and the doctors without verifying the malady used to give them pills to relieve them of the trouble. As they were not actually suffering from constipation, they would not really take the pills and go on accumulating them till such a day that they could not bear any longer the desire to have the Maharaja in their bedroom. Then they took three or four times the dose and contracted diarrhoea. When the Maharaja came to know of their illness he would go to their Palace to enquire about their health. The women were so clever that when the Maharaja went to see them they went on complaining of their indisposition till it was too late for the Maharaja to leave them. Sometimes he was compelled to spend even the night with them. The Maharaja till the end of his life had never discovered that this was a trick played on him to attract his attention.

There were also other methods adopted by the women. Sometimes they threatened to commit suicide on account of loneliness and love of the Maharaja. As a matter of fact, some of them did commit suicide by hanging themselves in their rooms by a rope fixed to the roof of the room. The Maharaja was frightened when he heard any woman complaining of loneliness. Usually he went to her and consoled her in every possible way. There were several women who never had the good fortune to be caressed and hugged by the Maharaja even once in his life time.

His infatuation bordering on deep love for his Maharanis and mistresses was great, and he tried to distribute it in an equal measure to all of them. The women in turn reciprocated it by believing that he was their only man.

Whenever he went to Europe he took with him at least a dozen women and once they were out of India

there was no classification between a Maharani, Rani or Mistress. There was no differentiation between them for food, clothes and lodging. Protocol observed at Moti Bagh Palace was set aside in Paris and London.

The Maharanis and other women lived in different palaces behind the main Palace, called Moti Bagh, which was the official residence of the Maharaja. Entrance into the interior of these palaces was most difficult for any person from outside. If one wished to enter Moti Bagh Palace he had to pass through a garden half a mile long and then get through the rooms of the aides-de-camp and several halls and rooms. There were Military guards at every twenty steps till one reached a small gate leading to the interior palaces. Military guards were not posted in the palaces of the Maharanis. Beyond this small gate there was a room where only old men not less than 80 years of age were squatting on the floor, giving and taking messages from the women inside.

Further, there were long galleries from where messages were brought from the Maharanis and other women by maid servants, but they were not allowed to see anyone excepting the attendant sitting in the entrance room. The palaces were lavishly decorated and generally the furniture was in European style, the equal of which no palaces in India or Europe possessed.

From amongst the Ministers and officials only two or three of them had the privilege of entering the Palace. I was a frequent visitor to these palaces. I was given a code on telephone or through a special messenger which I could use when confronted by the aide-de-camp or military guards at the different gates of the palace and could reach the room where attendants were squatting. Then the message was taken by one of the men to the elderly women on duty in the gallery who passed it on to the younger women, who in turn carried it to the spacious hall in the inner palace where the Maharaja sat on a richly caparisoned dais surrounded by his favourite women. After the Maharaja's permission was taken, I was allowed to enter the inner palace and was con-

ducted to the spacious hall and was presented to the Maharaja who was often seen having food and wine with his favourite women.

The same procedure was followed by anyone who was invited by the Maharaja to come to his inner palace. If the visitors were the favourites of the Maharaja he would ask them to stay on for several hours and join his drinking bouts. This privilege was usually given to the Prime Minister, and one or two other officials and relatives of the Maharaja and myself while the Maharaja received his other visitors, Ministers and officials in the outside palaces.

The most exquisite and beautiful women in transparent silk clothes bedecked with jewels offered smiles and drink to the invitees by the special orders of the Maharaja. Some women in Punjabi dress were deputed to offer cigarettes and others in saris offered wine and fruits. The splendour of Arabian Nights was put in shade by the splendour and magnificence at the court of Patiala.

The Maharaja was not jealous of his women and allowed his guests to be free with them, but he would not tolerate any vulgarity or misbehaviour. Dozens of beautiful women were lying at the feet of the Maharaja. A few were pressing his legs while others carried messages to and fro. The favourite of the night was the idol of the Maharaja and all eyes were set on her. Usually she sat near the knee of the Maharaja in gorgeous red, transparent one piece cloth, with diamond nose-rings, pearl necklaces and ruby bracelets.

Because of the voluptuous life of the harem and the political troubles which he had with the neighbouring states and the Viceroy of India, the Maharaja fell ill and got high blood pressure. The famous physicians of France, Professor Abrami and Dr. Andre Lichtwitz who had discovered a new method for bringing down blood pressure by giving special injections in the spinal chord, were sent for from France.

The Maharaja also had to take a trip to Europe for treatment and cure but the blood pressure could not be easily controlled particularly as the Maharaja did

not adhere to the advice of the doctors that he should not indulge in women and wine.

One day Professor Abrami told the Maharaja in my presence that if he was to survive he should abstain from any sexual excitement and alcohol for some months. To my great surprise the Maharaja telephoned to me at 2.30 a.m. that he was enjoying to his heart's content and asked me to bring Professor Abrami to the Palace. I immediately informed the Professor and we drove to the Palace and were ushered into the room of the Maharaja where he was lying with several women in intoxicated condition. The doctor gave him an injection to reduce his blood pressure and it went down but the Maharaja again indulged in the orgy of women and wine.

Professor Abrami seeing that the Maharaja would not listen to his advice, told him that he would go back as the patient was no longer seriously ill. He thought that by saying so he could easily get away without incurring the displeasure of the Maharaja. He did not care for the great fortune that he was making, i.e., about one lakh of rupees per month as his medical fees, but he cared more for his reputation and his future relationship with the Indian Maharajas. He went away after giving one final injection which brought down his blood pressure, but as the instructions given by the doctors were not followed by the Maharaja, the blood pressure again rose.

I went with Professor Abrami to Bombay to see him off as desired by the Maharaja. On my return I found the Maharaja in a very bad state of health. As in my absence the treatment was changed, Doctor Lichtwitz and other French doctors wired to Doctor Abrami in Paris that they were no longer wanted and that the Indian doctors had started to treat the Maharaja. Meanwhile the blood pressure had gone up still higher and he lost sight of both eyes.

The intrigue in the Palace had full play in my absence. A rumour was spread in the city by interested parties hostile to me that the injections given by the



French doctors to the Maharaja proved fatal to his health and the French doctors were told by Sir Liaquat Hayat Khan, the Prime Minister that they should not go out of the Palace for fear of hostile demonstration against them.

The Maharaja though completely blind did not want his women to know about it. As usual he used to call his favourite and beloved attendant, Sirdar Mehr Singh Bila, to tie his beard and turban and he used to sit before the mirror in the same way as he used to do before in order to show the women and men around him that he was not blind. The servants used to put *surma* to blacken his eyes in the same way as he used to do every day. The Maharaja used to dress in white silk sherwani and baggy trousers of the type of a salwar which usually men in Kashmir valley wore. After having been properly dressed he invited women to come and see him and talk to him in the same way as before. They had never noticed that the Maharaja had become blind. This was only known to the doctors, the Prime Minister and his favourite servants and myself. Some of his favourite women used to press his legs and body and as usual he caressed them and held them in his arms. Just a few days before his death, he again had sexual intercourse with a woman who gave birth to a son just nine months after his death.

The ruling princes and friends from all parts of India came to enquire about his health but only a few were admitted to the room. Others were told that the Maharaja had recovered and were asked to go back. The condition of his health became very bad and in the last days of his life Dr. B. C. Roy who afterwards became Chief Minister of West Bengal came to look after him. But when he came, the Maharaja's end was near. After a few days of treatment, the Maharaja collapsed into coma at about 12 o'clock at mid-day and remained in that state for about eight hours and then died.

Throughout the period of 8 hours of coma the senior Maharani, the mother of the heir apparent, and other Maharanis pressed his legs.

He was no much feared that the heir apparent Yadvindra Singh could not dare to go and get the treasury sealed up or the arsenal locked till such time as the Finance Minister, Sir Frederick Gauntlet, and I told him to perform his duties in accordance with the custom of the State. These steps were taken with a view to stop a coup d'etat and uprising with the help of arms and money.

In the older days the rival parties who were claimants to the throne used to capture the armoury and the arsenal and invade the capital of the State and declare themselves as the king at the death of the sovereign of the state.

There were rumours afloat that Maharaj Kumar Brijendra Singh, commonly known as John, second son of the Maharaja, though he was born as the first son before the birth of Yuvraj, would revolt and claim the throne of Patiala after the death of his father. There were strong rumours that there would be bloodshed outside the Palace between the partisans of Yuvraj (heir apparent) and the Maharaj Kumar. The Prime Minister and other ministers were fully aware of the designs of Brijendra Singh and military guards were posted at strategical places in the town. John had become bold in the last three or four days before the death of the Maharaja, as he began to show great affection and seemed to be repenting for depriving John of his legitimate rights.

The Maharaja told me a few days before his death that John be allowed to see him whenever he came to the Palace. The Yuvaraj and the Prime Minister came to know of the feelings of the Maharaja towards John, through me. The Yuvaraj and Prime Minister approached and begged me not to allow John to see his father. John was thus curtly told by the ADC-in-waiting that his father would not receive him. On the night before his death the Maharaja again asked me to call John. The matter was immediately reported by me to the Yuvaraj and the Prime Minister who were trembling at the idea that the Maharaja might proclaim John as the successor. All efforts were made to stop John

from seeing the Maharaja. The Maharaja uttered several times, 'John, John' before he got into a coma, and the Maharaja died after remaining in that state for eight hours.

To avoid any mishap or revolt, the Yuvaraj along with Sir Frederick Gauntlet went to seal the treasury and the arsenal. When the Yuvaraj returned, the Maharaja was still in the state of coma. The Yuvaraj was frightened lest the Maharaja regained his consciousness, as he would never have forgiven him for sealing these institutions while he was still alive.

At the death of the Maharaja, the women who were wearing precious jewels, pearl necklaces, diamond tiaras, emerald bracelets, and other precious jewellery tore them to pieces. The pearls and diamonds were scattered on the floor like pebbles. They were all wailing and weeping at the departure of their beloved Lord and King. They pulled out their hair and were screaming and shouting, 'don't go away, or take us too with you.' These women kept awake for the whole night; nor did they stop crying. They had torn away their gorgeous clothes and in that wintry night they did not care to protect themselves against cold.

Early next morning the Maharaja's dead body was bathed according to the Sikh rites and royal traditions of Patiala dynasty. The royal official regalia was put on him with all the decorations and orders which he had received from the British government and the governments of several foreign countries as well as the decorations of his own State. The turban was tied and the crown was put on his head. His scarlet coat blazing with cords of rubies and diamonds was put on him and the famous diamond 'Sans souci' which his forefathers possessed was pinned to his coat on the right of his breast. This special diamond was once wore by Empress Eugene of France in the time of Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte. He wore gold shoes and his beard was lifted with a silk string tied round his ears. He was seated on the throne chair and each man and woman of the Palace bowed before him and passed.

His eldest son Yadvindra Singh was the first to bow and pass and he was followed by the Maharanis and other women of the court. Then members of the royal family, ministers and other officials paid their homage to the departed Lord. Some women fainted and fell at the feet of the Maharaja and were removed with great difficulty. All the women were wearing white cotton simple clothes without ornaments or make-up. This audience lasted for about three hours. The body was then put on a gun carriage and was taken in a procession for cremation.

The funeral procession passed through the streets of the capital. The French doctors who attended on the Maharaja during his illness were asked not to join the procession since the mob excited by political enemies was hostile towards them. The funeral was the most resplendent ever seen in the history of the State. Over one million subjects of the Maharaja and people from the neighbouring States had gathered to pay their last homage to the Maharaja who, in spite of his many weaknesses, was loved dearly by his subjects.

## 14     *The Palace Intrigue*

**S**ARDAR BAHADUR SIR Gurnam Singh was a powerful Prime Minister of the Government of Patiala. In early youth he lived in a village called Raghumajra, a few miles away from the capital of the State, and tilled his small piece of land with his own hands but he had the good fortune of marrying his pretty daughter to His Highness Maharaja Bhupinder Singh Mohinder Bahadur of Patiala from whom a son was born on 7th January 1913. The boy was named Yadvindra Singh and was proclaimed Yuvraj, the Crown Prince, though Prince Brijendra Singh, the son of his first legally wedded wife, was born six months earlier, on 11th Aug. 1912. It so happened that the date of birth of Prince Brijendra Singh was shown to be 11th August 1913. Later on, under pressure of the Government of India the records were corrected and real ages of these two Princes were correctly shown in official records. After this correction, efforts were successfully made to get Prince Yadvindra Singh entitled to succeed to the throne of Patiala on the ground that Maharaja Bhupinder Singh had not wed the mother of Prince Brijendra Singh in a legal manner and as such he was held to be born out of wedlock. This representation worked well with the Political Department of the Government of India in spite of hostile whisperings and Prince Yadvindra Singh was declared Crown Prince of the Patiala State.

Gurnam Singh had risen slowly from one rung in the official ladder to another till he became the Prime Minister, and wielded great power and influence over the Maharaja and the favourite Maharani, who was his own daughter.

He amassed great wealth and appointed the Ministers of his Cabinet from his own kith and kin. He was also careful to appoint to key positions in the Household Departments of the Palace some of his own blood

relations in order to consolidate his position with the Maharaja and the Maharani. The Prime Minister lived in a magnificent house with a huge flower garden, full of tropical trees and plants. There were swimming pools in the compound of the house for the exclusive use of the Prime Minister and his family.

This luxury house was at some distance from the Palace, but he visited the Maharaja nearly every day unless he was indisposed or out on tour to different parts of the State, or had gone to Delhi or elsewhere in India for official work. Whenever he left the State he was careful to appoint as his successor a minister from among his blood relations, so that no one was able to oust him during his absence.

He ruled for a long time with a strong and powerful hand as Prime Minister, with the added prestige of being the Potentate's father-in-law. No one dared to criticise his administration or speak against him to the Maharaja. If anybody did, he was either thrown into prison or dismissed from service. His authority was felt by all officials of the State, high and low and the people feared him most, as he was cruel and administered justice in accordance with his whims. He took full advantage of the immature age of the Maharaja.

His house was well posted with military guards, with naked bayonets and admission into his house was forbidden. No one could enter his residence without a special permit which was granted only to a few through his Private Secretary, and that too, two or three months after the application for interview was received. He generally remained aloof and seldom visited clubs and social functions to keep up his prestige and dignity. Aloofness was considered a sign of greatness in those days and social contacts took place only between equals. Most Prime Ministers of the States thought that they were superior to all officials and the citizens of the State, and seldom mixed with others in social gatherings. Sir Gur-nam Singh rarely attended marriage parties or funerals as he thought it was beneath his dignity to do so.

A shrewd officer by the name of Sirdar Buta Ram,

in charge of the women's section of the palace, called "Ranwas Mubarik" — the Sacred Harem, was one day removed by the Senior Maharani from service and thus lost a most lucrative post. This Sirdar conceived a plan to get Gurnam Singh, the Maharani's father, discredited and removed from his exalted position and thus wreak vengeance on her.

This was not an easy matter for a man who was in disgrace and who was already considered by his colleagues as having fallen from the favour of the Maharaja and the Prime Minister. Sirdar Buta Ram, however, intrigued with Capt. Chanda Singh, the favourite Aide-de-Camp of the Maharaja, who was his bosom friend. He confided in him the plan he had thought of to get the Prime Minister dismissed by the Maharaja. Capt. Chanda Singh agreed and the Ex-Officer in charge of the Ranwas—Sacred Harem—then took the Aide-de-Camp into his confidence. Capt. Chanda Singh agreed and both of them then approached the Palace physician Colonel Naranjin Singh who also agreed to participate in the plot for the downfall of the Prime Minister. And a new drama began to be staged at the erotic court of Patiala.

Generally, the Prime Minister used to go and see the Maharaja at about 11 o'clock every morning at the Moti Bagh Palace and he used to announce his arrival to the Aide-de-Camp in waiting who would then send a message to His Highness the Maharaja announcing the arrival of the Prime Minister. The Maharaja if he was ready would immediately receive the Prime Minister, but if he was busy elsewhere, the Prime Minister had to wait in the drawing room of the palace next to the Aide-de-Camp's room where he was entertained lavishly for lunch and had to stay at the palace till such time as he was summoned by the Maharaja for audience. Usually the Maharaja did not like keeping him waiting for long, as he had respect for him on account of being his father-in-law, though the previous Prime Ministers had to wait for days and days.

Next day the Prime Minister arrived at the palace

at the usual hour and he entered the Aides-de-Camp's office. The Aide-de-Camp in waiting Capt. Chanda Singh told him that the Maharaja was not well and that he would not be able to see the Prime Minister that day. The Prime Minister asked Capt. Chanda Singh to make inquiries about the health of the Maharaja on his behalf and went back to his house.

Next day he came again and the message from the Maharaja was again given to the Prime Minister expressing his inability to receive him on account of his indisposition. The Prime Minister went on visiting the Palace daily for a week and Capt. Chanda Singh continued to give him the same message from the Maharaja. The Prime Minister after going to the Palace for a week or ten days asked Capt. Chanda Singh that as soon as His Highness had recovered, he should be informed and then he would come to the palace to see the Maharaja.

On the other hand the Maharaja was inquiring daily from Capt. Chanda Singh why the Prime Minister was not coming to the Palace regularly for his administrative duties but Capt. Chanda Singh went on telling him that the Prime Minister was not well and that he had sent a word to him that he would come only after he had recovered.

After 10 days had passed, the Maharaja sent for Colonel Naranjin Singh, the Palace physician, and asked him to go and see the Prime Minister. Colonel Naranjin Singh, went at once to the house of the Prime Minister and told him that His Highness was not well and would call the Prime Minister as soon as he recovered. After sitting with him for an hour or so, the physician returned to the Palace and after planning with Capt. Chanda Singh and the co-intriguer Sirdar Butaram went to the Maharaja and told him that the condition of his Prime Minister was bad and that he suspected that the Prime Minister was suffering from a serious nervous breakdown which might lead to insanity. The Maharaja became very anxious about the health of the Prime Minister and the Prime Minister was anxious about the



health of the Maharaja, but both of them did not know the exact state of affairs.

Like this two months had passed, the Prime Minister's friends began to suspect a plot and some of the confidential friends of the Prime Minister told him to see the Maharaja. The Prime Minister sent several messages and letters and messengers but none of them reached the Maharaja particularly as rumours were being spread in the palace that the Maharaja was annoyed with the Prime Minister, and that he would soon be dismissed. Most of the Palace staff were turning to the side of Sirdar Butaram. This rumour gave more strength to Buta Ram and some of the personal servants of the Maharaja were brought into the plot and became active participants in the whole scheme to oust the Prime Minister. Even some of the loyal friends of the Prime Minister deserted him and joined the group led by Sirdar Buta Ram.

Colonel Naranjin Singh one day told the Maharaja confidentially that his Prime Minister had actually gone mad and that on no account His Highness should see him lest the Prime Minister attacked him violently. The Palace physician at the same time told the Maharaja that he should not tell this secret to anyone, not even to his Maharani lest the Prime Minister came to know of it and would punish him. The Maharaja kept this a secret from his own Maharani and he was determined not to see the Prime Minister till he had fully recovered.

The Maharaja further passed orders that till the recovery of the Prime Minister, Nawab Sir Zulfikar Ali Khan, a scion of the ruling family of Malerkotla State whose services were lent to the State by the Government of India, should officiate as Prime Minister. This came as a bomb-shell to Sir Gurnam Singh, the Prime Minister and he came rushing to the Palace on foot to see the Maharaja. He started walking into the interior of the Palace when Capt. Chanda Singh told the military guard to stop him from going further. The Prime Minister got infuriated and went back to his own house

where he called his favourite Ministers and conferred with them with regard to what further steps he should take.

But, by then his position had become weak. Being no longer in power, his favourite Ministers were not inclined to listen to him, much less to obey him. One or two of them advised him to see the Maharaja on the road when he came out for shooting.

The Maharaja's programme for shooting was brought by one of the Ministers of the Cabinet to the house of the Prime Minister and the Prime Minister knew well the road through which the Maharaja was going for the tiger hunt in his private reserve at Pinjore about 75 miles away from the capital. Pinjore is on the Kalka-Ambala road and is approximately three miles from Kalka, in the foothills of the Himalayas.

The importance of the place is due to its Mughal garden, one of the finest gardens in the world. This garden is in terraces and its beauty is appreciable when one looks from the fine arched gateway. This building is an old design of superb beauty. Inside the garden is the Baradari Palace, palace of twelve doors. The home of licentious pleasure, Rang Mahal, another palace, stands across the stream and the tank. Shish Mahal, the Palace of Mirrors, is a few yards away with waterfalls and the lower terrace garden. All these palaces are picturesque and charming.

The building is practically unchanged since Governor Fadai Khan first built it about three hundred and fifty years ago. The springs, baths and temples of Pinjore are places of pilgrimage and can be traced as far back as the period of the Mahabharata of antiquity.

The Prime Minister and one or two of his friends secretly went to Pinjore by car and hid themselves in the forest near the road over which the Maharaja was to go for the shoot. It was known a few days earlier that five tigers had come down in that vicinity from Nepal.

Gurnam disguised himself as a farmer and his two companions also put on similar dress and they managed to stay in a village not far from the camp where

arrangements for the Maharaja's stay were made. In this camp all arrangements for food, wines and other luxuries were made, and tents were put up to accommodate the Maharaja, members of his family, hundreds of guests and officials of the government and their followers and the camp looked like a miniature town with all the amenities like electricity, water and sanitation in heart of a remote jungle.

Special seats called "Machans" were fixed on the trees in the forest, high enough to be beyond the reach of the tigers.

These "Machans" like perches are hunting boxes tied to the trees. All sides are covered with green branches of trees so that the animals are not aware of the presence of human beings. Rifles and guns were aimed at the animals through these branches of trees. On these Machans arrangements were made for food and drink. Those who were seated on the Machans were to keep silence lest tigers should hear their voice and run away. Even one's breath had to be controlled. Food and drinks in small bags and bottles were given to each shikari for the whole day.

The Maharaja and his guests went to the Machans by elephants as the tigers were roaming about at large, and each man had a loaded gun for his protection. Cars were left behind a few miles.

One thousand beaters with drums, flutes and other musical instruments of all kinds were marching behind the tigers in a semi-circle. They were shouting all sorts of calls to frighten the tigers who moved in, further and further away from the beaters. There were three male tigers and two tigresses in this beat. One of the male tigers got ferocious, showed his red tongue, snarled and with complete fearlessness attacked the two beaters and mauling them escaped behind the line.

While these two beaters were breathing their last, the other beaters, unmindful of the dying, lest the Maharaja's game was spoilt, continued in pursuit of the other tigers.

The further they went, the semi-circle became

narrower and narrower till such time that one tiger after another appeared in front of the Machans. The Maharaja and his guests fired at the tigers who when wounded jumped sometimes high enough to attack the shikaries on the Machans. The Maharaja got off his Machan and expressed a desire to stalk the tiger on foot against the advice of the Chief Shikar Officer. He roamed about with his gun in the thick forest all alone. He was reckless with tigers. He spotted the fifth tiger but before he could aim at it, the tiger saw him and growled like thunder and leaped right over the Maharaja who kept his *sang-froid*. The beaters stopped the tiger from crossing the line. The tiger turned. The Maharaja fired on the spot. It was a remarkable feat of courage and marksmanship. The Maharaja was mightily pleased with the arrangements of the Shikar and gave magnificent presents to the officers in charge of the shikar including Colonel Naranjin Singh and Capt. Chanda Singh.

The hunt was over and the Prime Minister and his two companions hiding in the village came to know that the Maharaja would be returning at such and such a time to his capital and that he would be going by car over the main road.

The Prime Minister and his two companions secretly left the village and went to a banyan tree on the road side and climbed up to hide themselves in its thick branches.

Somehow or other, the news that the Prime Minister and his two companions had left their home had leaked out. For, Buta Ram and his co-conspirators had also kept a vigilant eye on the movements of the suspended Prime Minister, and it was also known that Gurnam Singh was trying to meet the Maharaja on his way back to the capital. Colonel Naranjin Singh and Capt. Chanda Singh who had already risen very high in the estimation of the Maharaja for bringing luck to the Maharaja and for bagging all the tigers told the Maharaja that Gurnam Singh should be sent to a lunatic asylum and that if he happened to meet the Maharaja on

the roadside, the chauffeur of the Maharaja should be ordered to speed up the car without stopping so that Gurnam Singh might not attack the Maharaja.

The Maharaja, thus frightened, sent a few motor cars ahead to see if the Prime Minister was not loitering about on the main road and his own car followed them. Gurnam Singh and his two companions were not noticed by the occupants of these cars. As soon as Gurnam Singh and his two companions saw the car of the Maharaja flying the State flag, they got ready to meet the Maharaja. Hardly the car of the Maharaja had reached the tree when Gurnam Singh jumped from the tree along with his two companions and shouted out to the Maharaja "Your Highness, I am quite sane. This is an intrigue against me". The palace physician told the chauffeur of the Maharaja's car not to stop the car but to go ahead at full speed. Gurnam Singh ran after the car shouting "Your Highness, Your Highness". Immediately afterwards he and his two companions were overpowered by the Inspector General of Police, Sirdar Tara Chand, who was escorting the Maharaja's car. On the way Colonel Naranjin Singh and Captain Chanda Singh told the Maharaja that the Prime Minister had completely lost his senses and was only fit to be shut in a lunatic asylum. The Maharaja was convinced more than ever regarding the acute mental derangement of his Prime Minister. He pitied him and the Inspector General of Police, Tara Chand, was ordered by the Maharaja to take the Prime Minister to a private house near the hospital for treatment and that the Prime Minister should not be allowed to get out of the house till he was normal.

The two companions of the Prime Minister were sentenced to 14 years rigorous imprisonment for conspiracy against the Sovereign of the State.

After some time Colonel Naranjin Singh advised the Maharaja to send the Prime Minister to a lunatic asylum outside the State where he could be better looked after as, according to the physician the arrangements in the State Hospital were not good enough to give relief

to such a distinguished patient. The Maharaja gladly agreed to this suggestion and the Prime Minister was removed to an asylum in Dehra Dun, in Uttar Pradesh. This shock sent Sir Gurnam Singh, the victim of this masterly intrigue, actually mad for the rest of his life.

## 15 *Weird Ways to dismiss Ministers*

**M**AHARAJA YADVINDRA SINGH was born on 7th January 1913 — considered by many an unlucky year. Yadvindra Singh found ingenious and weird ways to dismiss his Ministers.

Immediately after his accession to the throne of Patiala after the death of his great father, he, with the help of young Aides-de-Camp and his favourite attendant Sirdar Mehr Singh Bila made a list of all the Ministers and officials whom he would remove from the service in numerical order. The lists were typed and kept in a secret drawer of the Maharaja's private room on the second floor of Moti Bagh Palace which was accessible only to the Maharaja or his principal attendant. The list contained the names of Ministers and officials whose dismissal was to be gradually announced. There were altogether 129 officers in the list to be discharged from service. The list had the names of those Ministers and Officials who in the past had enjoyed the full confidence of his father.

At first I did not believe that any action will be taken against the Ministers and Officials by the Maharaja in such an arbitrary manner but when I found that in accordance with the list, Officials and Ministers were dismissed under one pretext or the other, my eyes began to open with apprehension. The name of Sir Liaquat Hayat Khan was at Serial No. 37 in the list. I informed the Prime Minister that his fate was sealed and that he would be wise to take steps to safeguard his position but he disbelieved me, though I revealed to him that I had seen the secret list of Ministers and Officials whose services were to be dispensed with and that his number was 37 in the serial list of dismissals.

During the summer, Maharaja Yadvindra Singh along with his staff and young members of the family

were at Chail—the summer capital of the State. The meetings of the Cabinet used to take place there and the Prime Minister, Ministers and other Officials used to attend them by travelling from the winter capital, Patiala. At Chail, there is an extensive cricket ground, unique in the world, at an altitude of about 7,500 feet above sea level, where cricket matches between the State team and teams from outside were played. Even teams from England and other places were invited to come and play cricket matches. The ground has a lovely setting with high mountains in the background. One could see from this ground the Himalayan peaks of Badri Narain, Kailash Parbat and other gigantic mountains covered with snow.

One day when an interesting match was in progress, the Maharaja called the Prime Minister to his pavilion at the cricket ground for an important talk. The Maharaja was sitting alone in an easy chair. There was a screen separating the Maharaja's room from that of the Maharanis and other women of the court, who were sitting there and hearing the conversation which took place at the time. Hardly a minute had passed after his entry into the Maharaja's room, when he showed Sir Liaquat Hyat Khan a letter and asked him to read it. The letter apparently bore his signature. It was in fact an indictment of the Maharaja's administration under the baneful influence of his mother, the Raj Mata, and asked for his abdication. The letter was purported to be addressed to the Hon'ble Sir Harold Wilberforce Bell, KCMG, Resident for the Punjab States, with headquarters at Lahore in winter and Simla during the summer. It was written in the form of a personal letter to the Resident addressed as, "My dear Wilberforce Bell", and ended with the words, "Yours sincerely, Liaquat Hyat Khan". He stood aghast on reading the contents of this letter and denied all knowledge of it. He told the Maharaja that it was a completely forged document.

The Maharaja insisted that Sir Liaquat Hyat Khan was the author of this letter saying that it was taken



from the photostat copy of the original letter in possession of the Resident which he was able to obtain secretly by bribing rupees fifty thousand to the confidential clerk of Sir Wilberforce Bell. The Maharaja thus accused Sir Liaquat Hyat Khan of disloyalty and betrayal of his confidence. Meanwhile the cricket match continued.

The evening ended with drinks and snacks in honour of the visiting team. At these festivals held at the cricket ground, guests, staff of the Maharaja and officials were entertained in one pavilion by the Maharaja, while the women accompanying the guests were entertained by the Maharanis in the other pavilion till the late hours of the night. The guests were then regaled by an orchestra led by the famous musician, Max Gager who had played in French and German operas and the tunes were intermingled with Indian folk songs and Punjabi light music.

On the appointed time and date the Prime Minister was not only discharged from service but hereditary Jagir, a cash award of rupees one lakh twenty thousand per annum, life pension of rupees five thousand per month and rupees one thousand per month as other allowances which he was getting from the Government treasury were stopped. Sir Liaquat Hyat Khan spent the rest of his short life in Dehra Dun as a bankrupt. Similar was the miserable fate of the remaining 128 officials mentioned in the original list for dismissals.

## 16 *Defeat of the British*

**M**AHARAJA YADVINDRA SINGH called a meeting of the Generals of his Army. They were asked by the Maharaja to give their opinion about the invasion of the districts around his State, which formed part of British India at that time. The Generals told the Maharaja that the plan was feasible and they could invade the adjoining districts with the help of the State Forces and the cooperation of the population of those areas. They thought, in fact, that they could run over the whole of the neighbouring province and thus help to enlarge the territory of the Maharaja. I frankly expressed my views and told the Maharaja that such an invasion would not be successful and on the other hand he would lose his throne by such an impracticable venture.

In order to test the veracity of the opinion given by the Generals, the Maharaja held military manoeuvres at Pinjore near Kalka in the foothills of the Himalayas. Colonel Hamid Hussain Khan, a senior aide-de-camp, was put in charge of the operation as the Commander-in-Chief of the British Army and on the opposite side, General Harika, Commander-in-Chief of the Patiala Army, took over the command of the Patiala forces as its Chief. After many days of military exercises in the mountainous region, the British and Patiala troops clashed on several occasions, and eventually the troops of the Maharaja were victorious in conquering the territory of the British. The "British Commander-in-Chief," Colonel Hamid Hussain Khan was taken prisoner. The flag of the Maharaja was then hoisted over the British Headquarters as a mark of conquest of British territory by the Maharaja's troops. After the defeat of the British Army under the command of Colonel Hamid Hussain Khan, a silver rupee with the effigy of King Edward VII was thrown on the floor

and contemptuously trampled upon with shoes by the military officers of the Maharaja. Colonel Hamid Hussain who resembled King Edward VII on account of his bald head was also beaten with shoes and was abused by the Maharaja and his Generals. In spite of this success at the manoeuvres the Maharaja did not venture to attack the neighbouring British territory.

## 17 *Erotic Cabinet Meetings*

**G**HULAM GILANI was the Prime Minister of the Government of Kapurthala, an important State in Northern India, situated in the strategic Doab region of Punjab. He was virtually a dictator during the reign of Maharaja Nihal Singh of Kapurthala.

The ministers and officials of the State feared him, and even the Maharaja was dependent on him. There was no check on his powers by any other authority in the Government. He was like the terror-inspiring Haider Ali of Mysore or Mussolini of Italy.

In those days the Maharajas and the Kings were mere nominal figures but the real power was vested in the hands of the Prime Ministers who were in reality the dictators, like the Ranas of Nepal. These dictators used the Kings to satisfy the subjects as imperial symbols of authority, but wielded real power themselves.

Ghulam Gilani lived in the city of Kapurthala, not far out in splendid isolation. He held his daily cabinet meetings at Diwan Khana near the palace of Princess Gobind Kaur, daughter of Maharaja Nihal Singh and sister of Maharaja Kharak Singh, Ruler of Kapurthala State and she was renowned for her great beauty and sex appeal. Ghulam Gilani had a harem of his own, but he loved her madly.

In those times most of the Hindu States had Muslim Prime Ministers and the Court language used to be Persian or Urdu. Most of the official documents and files were written in Persian or Persianised Urdu. It was compulsory that ministers and officials of the State should know Persian and Urdu, indicating thereby that the influence of the Great Mughals was still there even after the Mughal Empire had ceased to exist a long time ago.

The Muslim officers of the State had no antagonism towards the Hindus, Sikhs or Christians. On the con-

trary they were more inclined to tolerate and respect the religion of others.

Ghulam Gilani came of a stock of Arab Muslims settled as the sediment of the invasions and migrations in Jullundur and Lahore and had a glorious past history. He was one of those who were not converted from Hinduism to Muslim religion, as millions of Hindus were in the time of the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb. He was related very closely to Nawab Sir Liaquat Hyat Khan, Prime Minister of Patiala State and his brother Nawab Sir Sikander Hyat Khan, later Prime Minister of the Punjab State.

Ghulam Gilani was a man of most luxurious habits and had many wives who were strictly veiled as ordained by the Muslim faith. One part of the Diwan Khana was set apart exclusively for his personal use and in the other part, Cabinet meetings used to be held. These meetings took place everyday when most of the ministers brought their official files for submission to the Prime Minister and for receiving his orders. At the back of the Diwan Khana there was a garden for his relaxation.

... In one part of the house, Ghulam Gilani had a narrow underground tunnel dug up which connected the Diwan Khana with the adjacent palace where Princess Gobind Kaur lived. This tunnel was unknown to anyone except Ghulam Gilani and Gobind Kaur and at the entrance of the tunnel there was a big spacious room where Ghulam Gilani administered justice and did his official work of the day.

In front of this room there was a big hall where the ministers collected for Cabinet meetings, presided over by the Prime Minister. The time for the meeting usually was about 2 p.m. in the winter months and about 9 a.m. in the summer months. Ghulam Gilani had put up a big curtain between the main hall and his study room adjoining it. He sat in the small room on a Persian carpet with a huge white pillow on which he inclined and smoked hooka (a big smoking pipe) and used to conduct the proceedings while the other

ministers sat luxuriously in the main room on Persian carpets but they were not allowed to smoke hooka. Screened by the curtain the Prime Minister's movements were not noticeable and he went through the tunnel to the palace of Gobind Kaur to be with her whenever it pleased him and at the same time gave the appearance of carrying on the administration of the State.

Whenever the Cabinet meetings were held, the ministers of the State including the Heads of Departments numbering about twenty used to be summoned and with the addition of clerical staff, their number was not less than about 40 to 50. The Ministers attending the meeting were the Finance Minister, Revenue Minister, the Minister for Law and Justice, Minister of Education, Minister for Home Affairs, Minister for Health and Minister for Miscellaneous Departments such as Stables, Elephants, the Zoo, Tosha Khana and Farash Khana, the departments of State paraphernalia and rare collection of manuscripts and records.

There was also a Minister in charge of the religious endowments and Public Works Department. Then there were the Sarishtedars (Head Clerks) and the Chief Secretary to the Cabinet. Each Minister prepared the case and submitted his views in writing to the Prime Minister who had the power to agree with the views of the Minister or not and give final orders. All the Ministers used to study thoroughly the civil and criminal cases including murder cases, civil or revenue disputes, and submitted their views to the Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister had adopted a peculiar and unique method for conducting the proceedings of the Cabinet. As he used to sit behind the curtain, he was not visible to the members of the Cabinet but he could speak to them whenever he wanted to do so. The Cabinet members were given to understand that whenever he was silent on a case, this should be considered as rejected, but while if he would say, 'Yes' or 'I don't mind agreeing with you,' then they should understand that the Prime Minister agreed with the views of the

Minister concerned.

But it habitually happened that when the Cabinet Meeting was going on, the Prime Minister used to sneak away from his study room. He was away to the residence of Gobind Kaur through the underground tunnel. The Ministers used to read out their cases loudly and submitted them to the Prime Minister seeking his sanction, but as most of the time, the Prime Minister was not in his room, there was no response from him. Silence had meant that the case was rejected by the Prime Minister. Whenever it suited the Prime Minister to bring Gobind Kaur to his study room, he did so and she used to sit in his lap while he presided over the Cabinet meetings sitting behind the curtain, smoking the hukka and drinking strong beverages especially brewed for the Prime Minister. The most intoxicating wines were prepared with the admixture of precious metals including gold, silver and pearls of rare value which cost the Prime Minister one thousand rupees per cup. The Ministers sitting in the next room were ignorant of what was happening in the Prime Minister's room. Both the Prime Minister and Princess Gobind Kaur drained one cup after another. The Ministers were under the illusion that their presiding genius was there alone attending carefully to the cases and reports submitted to him by them.

The Cabinet meeting would last several hours during which period Ghulam Gilani was either at the palace of Gobind Kaur or playing with her a romantic game in the Cabinet room. The Ministers would get disappointed to find that nearly all their recommendations were rejected by the Prime Minister.

After some time the Ministers came to know of the mystery surrounding Ghulam Gilani's performance. They decided to find out a way to get rid of such a licentious Prime Minister. The public was also tired of the administration as most of the innocent people were hung and murderers were set scot free. The revenues of the State dwindled and the treasury got depleted. The people were revolting everywhere.

## 18 *Princess Gobind Kaur*

**P**RINCESS GOBIND KAUR, the daughter of Maharaja Nihal Singh of Kapurthala, was brought up in great luxury and splendour of the court of her father. She had one real brother by the name of His Highness Maharaja Randhir Singh and Raja Sir Harnam Singh, the father of Raj Kumari Amrit Kaur, former Minister of Health in the Government of India, after partition of the country in 1947, was her nephew.

Princess Gobind Kaur was married to a nobleman of great wealth and position. At the time of her marriage she had laid down one condition that she would live with her husband only at Kapurthala and would not go to live with him in his native town called Kartarpur—a small town, 10 miles away from Kapurthala. The husband agreed and the Maharaja placed at the disposal of his daughter and son-in-law a palace near Jalao Khana (Royal Palace) where the Maharaja with members of the royal family lived.

This palace, a six-storeyed building, was built in the style of the old Indian architecture, constructed with small bricks and wooden slippers and concrete. The palace had only one gate and anyone entering the palace had to enter by that gate. The gate was well guarded by military guards and no one was allowed to enter the palace without the permission of the officer-in-charge of Deorhi (the Entrance Hall).

The palace was well furnished in pure oriental style and there was a special ornamental place called Shah Nisheen, the Royal Balcony, from where formerly the Maharaja used to make his appearance to the public every morning. It was there that the princess used to sit most of the time from where she could see the people passing by. The Shah Nisheen was screened in such a way that the Princess could see every person from outside but no one from outside could see



her. The palace also had big drawing rooms, dining rooms and bed rooms and a spacious courtyard and a well for drawing water.

The Princess was abnormally licentious and sexual and could not get her sexual desires satisfied with her husband who was ugly, uncouth, weak and slow witted. Mentally and physically deformed, he was a degenerate, a drunkard and a rake. She used to beckon young well-built handsome men to enter the palace by some excuse or other to share her bed. She did not even spare the military guards who were on duty at the gate. She was not in any way inferior to Katherine the Great of Russia in her voluptuous love affairs or Cleopatra of Egypt. Her husband was in the know of her love affairs and was disgusted with her and had to content himself with his fate and began to live outside the palace in a house called Baradari (The house of twelve doors) and only occasionally went to see his wife but conjugal relationship between them had ceased.

His Excellency Nawab Ghulam Gilani, Prime Minister of the Government of Kapurthala State, held daily cabinet meetings and spent most of his time in the palace nearby, called Diwan Khana, residence of the Prime Minister, though he actually lived with his harem in another house, a mile away from the Diwan Khana in the city.

Ghulam Gilni was a handsome tall man. He used to put on his head a round gold cap which resembled in form the Crown of England without the precious jewels. He had a trimmed beard and with his loose coat and silken pyjamas he looked a Don Juan. He had heard of the beauty of the Princess. He saw her one day from Diwan Khana when the Princess was drying her hair in the sun on the top floor of her palace and he fell in love with her at first sight.

The Prime Minister tried his utmost to meet her but it was not an easy thing to do so owing to the customs and restrictions attached to the princely houses, particularly in houses occupied by princesses

of the realm.

Nobody could enter the palace without being noticed by the entourage of the palace and her military guards standing at the gate. The Princess used to go out daily for a drive on a coach driven by two horses but whenever she left the palace she was so well veiled that even the courtiers and military guards could not see her face or body. Huge walking curtains surrounded her from the Deorhi to the coach in order that she could enter the coach without being seen by anyone. The Prime Minister used to watch her movements whenever she went out for a drive and he became more and more infatuated with her beauty and charm.

Ghulam Gilani had a suite of rooms for his personal use in the Diwan Khana and he began to spend even nights over there, contrary to the usual practice of the former Prime Ministers who used this place only for Cabinet meetings and official work. This palace was never used by them for residential purpose. The Prime Minister also used to go out to Jullundur, a place about 12 miles from the capital where he spent his week-ends with members of his family. Though the distance was only 12 miles, it took about two hours to reach Jullundur by coach, drawn by horses. The horses were changed at two or three places en route to speed up the journey as a relay. One day the Prime Minister sent a message to the Princess through her maid servant, Moulo, who was bribed very heavily that he would like to meet her and the Princess agreed, but it was a problem how this could be arranged. An underground tunnel was dug connecting the palace of Gobind Kaur, through which they went to and fro but Ghulam Gilani was not satisfied with short visits to the palace. He wanted to take her to his house at Jullundur where he would be with her for long hours, at leisure, without any fear or formality and he found a way.

The carriage of the Prime Minister was drawn by two horses. There was a coachman and a valet in front of the seat of the coach and two sayeees stood

behind the coach in liveried uniforms with gold and silver buttons and silk turbans over which gold lace was stitched. The coach was a landau which could be closed and opened. The coach used by the Prime Minister was similar to that of the princess, but the harness of the horses of the princess' coach were studded with emeralds and precious stones while that of the Prime Minister had only silver and ordinary gems. In the middle of the coach there was a box between the front and back seats where usually fodder for the horses was kept. This box was opened at the halting places to supply fodder to the horses.

A plan was hatched by the Prime Minister and the princess that she should go with the Prime Minister in his coach on an appointed day when he left for Jullundur. She managed to escape from the palace by getting herself dressed up as a sweepress with her face veiled and got into the box meant for fodder and remained hidden there by closing the lid of the box which was a part of the coach. Before entering the box she removed the dung of the horses and swept the floor in order to avoid any suspicion. She remained in that box for three hours before the Prime Minister could manage to get into the coach, being delayed by some urgent Government work which was sent to him by the Maharaja for immediate disposal. The coach left for Jullundur in the usual way. As soon as the coach crossed the main streets and was out of town the lid of the box was removed by the Prime Minister and there the Prime Minister and the Princess sat together in the coach in each other's arms, kissing, hugging and smoking.

A big silver hukka which the Prime Minister always took with him while going to Jullundur was used by them for smoking. The hukka is a sort of a big pipe which is attached to a pot of water through which the smoke is inhaled, with a fire jar on top of it. Thus the smoke is free from nicotine and other harmful elements. The hukka was generally used at home, but for travelling purposes, only the Maharajas, Nawabs, Prime

Ministers, Ministers and wealthy people could use it, being so bulky.

It was unusual for a middle-class man to have a coach and thus hukka was used while travelling only by those who had coaches and carriages. This particular hukka of Ghulam Gilani was made of massive gold and the tobacco used was the best tobacco perfumed in Lucknow by the best manufacturers of perfumes.

The Prime Minister enjoyed thoroughly the company of the Princess on his two-hour journey to Jullundur and on reaching there they went to a house especially reserved for the Prime Minister and spent several hours together in bed in each other's arms. Special preparations of intoxicants — wines, strong alcoholic drinks and sumptuous food and perfumes drowned them in voluptuous embraces and kisses. Time passed rapidly and hours looked like minutes and seconds. Ghulam Gilani preferred opium and even strong preparations of arsenic.

These escapades were repeated several times in a month and remained unnoticed for several months. One day, the senior Minister of the Government, Diwan Ramjas, the author's Great Grand Father came to know of the escapades of the Princess and Ghulam Gilani. Gobind Kaur's maid servant was in love with the chief cook of the royal kitchen, Amanat Khan, to whom she told the secret. Amanat Khan was the friend of Ali Mohammed who was a faithful servant and told the secret to his Master the Senior Minister. As the public was already dissatisfied with the administration of the Prime Minister who seldom heard the complaints and grievances of the public, there was great agitation. The people were revolting against him and they wanted to get rid of the Prime Minister.

As no tangible charge could be found to dismiss the Prime Minister, the Ministers of the Government were trying to find out an opportunity to catch the Prime Minister with Gobind Kaur.

At a secret meeting of ministers it was decided that

Ghulam Gilani and Gobind Kaur should be caught red handed when going to Jullundur. A regiment was posted outside the outskirts of the State and as soon as Ghulam Gilani and Gobind Kaur came out of the town in the usual manner unprepared for such a calamity, the Prime Minister was arrested and was exiled from the State while the Princess was locked up in her palace and was forbidden to go out of the palace for several months.

The Princess was not much worried about the fate of the Prime Minister nor about her own fate as she had no love for Ghulam Gilani. It was only sex which counted with her. She was a woman with no loyalties. Her real self was revealed when soon after she fell in love with Waryam Singh.

## 19 *Plight of a Princess*

**P** RINCESS GOBIND KAUR had many other secret love affairs, but the most interesting, thrilling and lasting of them all was her love for Colonel Waryam Singh, a high military officer of the State Army whose ancestors had rendered valuable services to the rulers of the State. He fell a victim to the charm and beauty of the Princess when he went to the palace of Gobind Kaur to inspect the military guard posted there. The same problems arose how Waryam Singh could meet the Princess as the main gate was guarded by the military guards and the Princess was not allowed to go out even for her daily drives. Her other maid servant Basanti carried the messages of Waryam Singh to the Princess and from the Princess to Waryam Singh. He soon discovered a way to meet her. There was a well inside the palace for drawing water for royal use. The wall of the well was also the outer wall of the palace. Waryam Singh contrived a breach in the wall from the basement and a rope with a bucket of brass used for drawing water was thrown by the Princess and Waryam came up by means of this rope into the apartment of the Princess, in the palace, without being noticed by anyone. The Princess had to draw up Waryam Singh from the well with the help of her lady companions who were in her confidence.

Once Waryam Singh was inside the palace, he spent the whole night with the Princess who dressed herself in gorgeous clothes to receive him. The golden bed with pillows of the best Banaras embroidery and sheets of the finest silks was spread on the bed by the orders of the Princess. Jasmine and roses were thrown on the bed on which Waryam Singh and Gobind Kaur tossed about and spent the whole night locked up tight in each other's arms. Before daybreak, Waryam Singh left the palace through the well in the same

way as he came in. He took good care to see that he closed the bricks of the structure at the basement of the palace and the well before he returned to his house. These romantic meetings remained unnoticed for two years.

Ultimately Sirdar Danishmand, Minister of Home Affairs of the Government of Kapurthala came to know of the secret. As he was unfriendly to Waryam Singh, he made full use of the secret. Waryam Singh was seen entering the palace at night by the night patrolling police squad. They informed the police officer on duty at the Police Station. Immediately the Home Minister was informed and along with the Inspector General of Police and twelve police constables he came to the palace. The police force began to open the massive gates of the Palace to capture Waryam Singh and the Princess. When Waryam Singh and the Princess came to know of what was happening at the gate they escaped through a private tunnel which connected the palace to a well about 100 yards away outside the palace, where the Princess used to take bath daily. They spent the whole night in the cold water in the well and escaped from there early in the morning unnoticed, while Sirdar Danishmand and others were still busy in forcing through several massive gates of the palace one after the other. When they reached the private rooms of the Princess after crashing through the three gates of the palace to capture Waryam Singh and the Princess, they found to their utter disappointment that the rooms were empty and Waryam Singh and Gobind Kaur had escaped.

Waryam Singh and Gobind Kaur went to a village called Kalyan near Sultanpur about 20 miles from Kapurthala, in slow marches on foot. This village being in British territory was beyond the jurisdiction of the Government of the State of Kapurthala and police force of the State could not lay hands on them.

Waryam Singh and Gobind Kaur had no means of livelihood, as the Princess was deprived of her jewellery and wealth, and allowance, while Waryam Singh was

disowned by members of his own family and was disinherited. They both lived in a mud house at Kalyan and started earning their livelihood by farming. Waryam Singh ploughed the land and the Princess prepared cow-dung as a fuel to prepare food for her husband and herself, thus fulfilling the demands of their romance-drunk hearts.



## 20 *Maharaja and the Collaterals*

**H**IS HIGHNESS FARZAND-I-DILBAND Rashik-ul-itkad-i-englishia Raja-Rajgan Maharaja Sir Jagatjit Singh, G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., G.B.E., was the Ruler of Kapurthala State. His father, Maharaja Kharak Singh, had no issue and the throne of Kapurthala would have gone to another dynasty in the collaterals but for the clever manoeuvring of the Senior Ministers of the Government. They and other important officials of the State in particular and the public at large did not want that any one of the collaterals should be the future rulers of the State, and particularly those who had embraced Christianity as their religion.

The Prime Minister, Dewan Ramjas C.S.I., was a great political and social reformer of his epoch. He made up his mind to carry out the wishes of his colleagues and the people of the State. Very few of the collaterals were men of integrity and character in the eyes of the people of the Kapurthala State, and their blood was also doubted and the officials were afraid of the dire consequence if any of them succeeded to the throne of Kapurthala. Moreover, on account of the feud which went on for years between the collaterals and Maharaja Randhir Singh, father of Kharak Singh, since the death of Maharaja Nihal Singh, any one of these collaterals succeeding to the throne would have endangered the life and position of the members of the Royal family of Kapurthala, as well as of the Ministers and officials of the State. Therefore, every effort was made that none of these collaterals should succeed to the throne of Kapurthala.

Years passed but no child was born to Maharaja Kharak Singh and there was general disappointment in the State. Some plans were hatched to produce a boy as heir to the throne. Many confidential plans were submitted to the Prime Minister but none was accept-

ed by him as a practical one. Diwan Ramjas and another Minister Sirdar Bhagat Singh thought of a plan which ultimately succeeded. It was planned that a boy from a respectable family of the State should be brought to the lap of the Maharani who should be declared as the son of Maharaja Kharak Singh. The Maharaja had been declared insane by the State Physician, Doctor Ram Rakha, though in reality he was only a hot tempered Prince. He was taken to Bhagsu near Dharmasala in Kangra District, in the Himalayas, a hill station only about 150 miles, from Kapurthala. He was interned in a house there, and was not allowed to see anyone without the permission of the doctor in attendance.

The Maharani was not opposed to the proposal of the Prime Minister and she agreed that she should declare herself pregnant.

Keserdevi, an Indian old haggard and wrinkled midwife who had access to the Maharani at all times of the day and night was engaged to attend to the Maharani at her delivery time. The Maharani was asked to say that it was her own baby when a baby was brought to her lap. Information about some women who were expecting children in the Capital was given to the Diwan. A boy was born to the wife of Lala Harichand, who was afterwards appointed as the Finance Minister of the State and was given the title of Diwan. He was also a close friend of Diwan Ramjas and lived opposite to his house near the main shopping centre. The boy was brought to the palace at 2 o'clock in the morning of 26th November 1872 and was put in the lap of the Maharani. The Maharani had already been declared pregnant by the doctors and nurses of the palace since nine months.

On the birth of the prince, guns were fired and celebrations started which lasted for forty days incurring an expenditure of about a million of rupees and to these celebrations the Governor of Punjab, many British officials and Maharajas of Kashmir, Patiala, Gwalior and other neighbouring States were invited. Alms were dis-

tributed to the poor and prisoners were set free. As Maharaja Kharak Singh was declared insane, he had no voice though he protested against the birth of a son to him particularly when he said that he had no conjugal relations with the Maharani for several years. The Maharani, however, herself declared that the child was born to her. The doctors, nurses and midwives were bribed to keep their mouths shut.

The collaterals got suspicious of the plot and they approached the Government of India to intervene in the matter. A British doctor by the name of Colonel Warburton, who was the Chief Medical Officer of the State, was asked to go into the whole case and give a report of his findings to the Government. The Colonel made investigations by interrogating the Maharani through a woman interpreter, as the Colonel could not see her directly on account of the Court regulations. Out of sheer policy and diplomacy he made up his mind to take sides with the Prime Minister, and the Colonel took the statements of Ministers and officials, lady doctors, and nurses who attended on the Maharani at the time of the birth of the son. He also interrogated the leading public men and women. He found on investigation that the boy was brought from some other family and declared as heir to the throne, but the great Diwan and his friends paid heavy bribe in cash to the Colonel who hushed up the whole affair. Colonel Warburton gave his verdict that the Maharani was the real mother of the child. The Government of India accepted the boy as an heir to the throne, but the collaterals would not accept the declaration of the Government and they approached the Viceroy of India personally. In the meantime, the Diwan got signatures of the prominent citizens of the State, numbering about one hundred thousand, called Major Nama and forwarded the same to the Government of India protesting against the interference by the collaterals in the personal and internal affairs of the Maharaja and his Government. However, once again an officer of high status of the political department of the Government of India was

sent to the palace to verify the allegations made by the collaterals and he too fell a prey to the hidden temptation offered to him by the Diwan. This time the temptation was in the form of a precious necklace for his wife who was dazzled to see this unique string of pearls which was given in the 18th century to the ruler of Kapurthala by Ahmed Shah Abdali, the Afghan invader, as a token of his friendship for him. He too reported to the Viceroy regarding the legality of the child who was to be the future ruler of Kapurthala State.

There was so much of resentment by the collaterals that a regular feud arose between them and the Diwan and his family. The dispute rose to such a pitch that the collaterals were expelled from the State for their intrigues and they were compelled to stay in Jullundur City, a town about 12 miles from the capital of the State. The Government of India gave them handsome allowances and gave them titles of Rajas and conferred upon them the Knight Commander of the Star of India and of the British Empire. A branch of the family which gave real trouble was that of Kanwar Harnam Singh who was honoured in many ways by the British Government in India. He was knighted and was given the title of hereditary Raja.

On the death of Maharaja Kharak Singh in mysterious circumstances, the boy Jagatjit Singh who was five years old was declared sovereign of the State. A council of regency was appointed under the presidency of Diwan Ramjas who began to rule the State on behalf of the Maharaja till he attained the age of 18 and was given full sovereign powers at an investiture ceremony by the Governor of the Punjab.

The Maharaja, descended from the famous Rajput family of Bhatti Rajputs, was the direct descendant of Shri Ram Chander who is considered by the Hindus as the personification of God. The founder of the dynasty was Jassa Singh who conquered the State following the fall of the Mughals in the time of Ahmed Shah Abdali. One of his descendants, Maharaja Randhir Singh, the grandfather of Jagatjit Singh had also

trouble with the same branch of his collaterals who appealed to the Viceroy later against the acceptance of Kharak Singh's son as heir to the throne. Maharaja Nihal Singh left a will, declaring that the State should be divided into three portions, out of which one portion should go to his first son Maharaja Randhir Singh and the other two portions to his two other sons, who were the sons of the Maharaja from another Maharani, with whom he was in love. Maharaja Randhir Singh would not accept this will and said that the will was made by the Maharaja under the influence of the Maharani and therefore the will was null and void. The two sons Sirdar Kanwar Bikramajit Singh and Kanwar Suchet Singh from this Maharani appealed to the Governor, Sir Henry Lawrence, to honour the will, but the Governor gave his decision in favour of Maharaja Randhir Singh. The collaterals appealed to the Viceroy, Sir John Lawrence, who was the brother of the Governor of the Punjab and he ordered that the will of the Maharaja Nihal Singh should be considered as valid. The Maharaja did not accept the decision of the Viceroy and appealed to the Secretary of State for India and to Her Imperial Majesty Queen Victoria in England. The Maharaja sent Diwan Mathra Dass, son of Diwan Ramjas, who was at that time Revenue Minister of the State, to England to plead the case and to interview Queen Victoria. The Maharaja gave the Diwan power of attorney to fight the case on his behalf in England. As the words used in granting the power of attorney may be interesting to the readers, the true copy of the document is quoted below:—

“To all to whom these presents shall come, I Farzand-i-Dilbund Rashkul Itiquad-i-Doulat-i-Englishea, Raja-i-Rajgan, Randhir Singh Bahadoor, Ahluwalia, Wali Kapurthala (in the Punjab) va Baundi, va Batuali, va Ikouna, G.C.S.I., send greeting.

Whereas I am preferring an appeal to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for India in Council from the orders passed by the Government of India with reference to the claims made upon me by Sirdar

Bikram Singh and Kanwar Suchet Singh under the alleged will of my late father, Rajah Nehal Singh deceased, and am, about to memorialise the said Secretary of State thereon and I am therefore desirous of appointing my trusted and confidential servant, Diwan Mathra Dass to represent me in all matters connected with such memorial or appeal, I being at present unable personally to appear myself before the said Secretary of State to urge the prayer of the said Memorial, and whereas I am desirous that full faith and credit should be given to all acts which my said Diwan Mathra Dass may perform, do and execute in my name and on my behalf.

Now, therefore know ye by these presents, witness that I the said Farzand-i-Dilband Rashkul Ittiquad-i-Doulat-i-Englishea Raja-i-Rajgan Randhir Singh do by these presents nominate, and appoint my said Diwan the said Mathra Dass my trusted and lawful Attorney and agent for me and in my name to appear, and my person to represent before the Secretary of State for India in Council for the time being or any other officers or officials of the British Government to whom the said memorial may be submitted or any other person or persons whomsoever to give such information or particulars as to the said memorial and the various matters which therein referred to as may or shall be required. And for such or any other purpose to sign and present my other memorial papers or documents as my said Attorney shall deem expedient and to take necessary steps for prosecuting the prayer of my said memorial or any other memorials so presented as aforesaid by said Attorney as occasion shall or may require. And also to nominate depute or retain and appoint any Counsel or Solicitors or Agents as my said Attorney shall think fit and to give and sign any retainers, Warrants, and proxies and to pay all such fees, costs, charges, and expenses and make any other necessary disbursements on my behalf. And generally to do, perform, and execute all such further and other acts, deeds, matters and things as shall be requisite or necessary in or about the premises in as full effectual and beneficial a man-

ner, as I might or could do in my own proper person. And lastly thereby ratify and confirm all and whatsoever my said Attorney shall do or cause to be done in or about the premises by virtue of these presents.

Given under my hand and seal at Lucknow, on the 12th day of August, the Christian Year 1868.

Sd/-

Randhir Singh Ahluwalia of Kapurthala

His Highness the Raja-i-Rajagan Randhir Singh who is personally known to me affixed his seal and signed his name in my presence.

Sd/-

R. A. Davies  
Chief Commr Oudh.

Dewan Mathra Dass was provided with large funds and he was allowed to take with him Indian cooks, butlers and servants. He even took provisions for food and Ganges water as he was not accustomed to taking English food and using water of that place. The Ganga water was also used to purify the food which he might take in a foreign country on an emergency occasion. Being clever and shrewd, Diwan Mathra Dass employed the best lawyers in England and got the best legal advice and help. He placed the whole case before the Queen. In the days of Queen Victoria, the Privy Council was more or less guided by the Sovereign Queen in matters connected with India. The East India Company had ceased to exist and the Queen of England had become the Empress of India. The Queen being a very pious and religious woman did not like the idea of collaterals inheriting the major portion of the State while the actual heir to the throne Randhir Singh should have only one-third of the State. The Queen disagreed with the decision of the Viceroy and the two brothers were given Rs. 36,000 per year and they were asked to live outside the State. Though

they remained outside the State, at a place called Jullundur, the feud in the family went on and though the Maharaja succeeded, the intrigues of the collaterals went on. They even succeeded in getting the Maharani to make a statement to the Governor of Punjab Sir Henry Lawrence, that the boy Jagatjit Singh was not born to her, but it was too late. She was also declared insane by the Civil Surgeon of the State. Diwan Mathra Dass was honoured by the Maharaja and was given jewels and land gifts. Celebrations took place throughout the State to commemorate the occasion of his return with success. The revenue taxes were reduced to please the farmers and the salaries of Ministers, officers and subordinates were increased by double. The prisoners were set free. There were prayers of thanksgiving in temples, churches and mosques.

Maharaja Randhir Singh had the good fortune of wearing the sword used by Nadir Shah of Persia and the famous topaz which Nadir Shah also wore on his arm, but Maharaja Jagatjit Singh got it set in his belt which he used on official and formal occasions. These were the gifts given to Maharaja Fateh Singh by Nadir Shah. Jagatjit Singh was also lucky to drive in gold and silver carriage drawn sometimes by six or sometimes by eight horses wearing most precious jewels and emerald studded harnesses to the value of several million rupees which also his ancestor Maharaja Fateh Singh had received as a gift from King Nadir Shah.

Maharaja Jagatjit Singh ruled for 69 years and was recognised by the Government of India as a true son of Maharaja Kharak Singh. He was honoured by the British Government and received highest decorations and honours from the Kings of England and the Presidents and Kings of other foreign countries. However, his great ambition to get G.C.V.O. from the hands of the King of England, Emperor of India, was not realised. A copy of the aide-memoire he personally handed over to the King when he was received by him at the Buckingham Palace. His craving for decorations as that of other ruling Princes was insatiable.



At his death, at the age of 74, there was official mourning throughout India and flags flew half mast, not only in Kapurthala State and India, but also in European countries, particularly in France. France considered him as her best friend and had conferred on him, during his life time, Grand Cross of Legion d' Honneur.

## 21     *At Abdine Palace*

**J**AGATJIT SINGH, MAHARAJA of Kapurthala, when he was in Cairo, asked for a special audience with King Faud of Egypt. The King not only granted him an audience but also invited him to an official luncheon party, which was attended by the Prime Minister, Mustafa Zaglul Pasha, leader of the Wafd and other Ministers of his cabinet as well as the senior-most officials of his Court, who were dressed up in official uniform with red turbush as head-dress.

The British aides de camp were given the title of Pasha and they could only be recognised as British from their slightly fair complexion. The Maharaja was received at the entrance by the Grand Chamberlain of the Court and afterwards he inspected the Guard of Honour. He was then taken by the Grand Chamberlain to the Main Hall where he was met by other high officials before he was conducted to the drawing room where the King was waiting for him.

The lunch consisted of delicious Egyptian dishes and French wines. Zaglul Pasha, the then Prime Minister of Egypt, the most popular man of the epoch, the Royal Princes, including Prince Mohammed Ali and the high dignitaries of the country were also present. Coffee was served in cups studded with diamonds and other precious stones and waiters, in gorgeous clothes with golden Aigerettes and red Turkish hats, bowed low in obeisance when pouring coffee for the guests. The menu served at the lunch was as follows:—

### *Dejeuner*

Caviar frais Blinis de Sarrasin  
Saumon du Rhin a la Victoria  
Selle D' agneau de lait a la chatelaine, Cailles au riz  
Poularde de Braise Lambertye

Yalandji — Dolmas  
Dinde de Fayoum rotie  
Salade pointes d' Asperge  
Mille — feuilles a la Parisien  
Cantaloup glace  
Chapeau de fille de friandise

Palais d' Abdine  
Lundi le 13 Mars 1933

After the lunch was over, the King took the Maharaja to his study for a private talk, while Sirdar Muhabbat Rai, Private Secretary to the Maharaja and I were conducted to the office of the Grand Chamberlain to await the return of the Maharaja.

There were series of funny noises throughout the conversation while the Maharaja was talking to the King in the opposite room with doors left wide open. It seemed like the barking of dogs.

Getting curious about the peculiar noise, Sirdar Muhabbat Rai felt compelled to enquire from the Chamberlain about the peculiar bark at this time when there were no dogs visible near about the palace. The more so when in the palaces of the Muslim Kings no dogs were generally permitted. This animal is normally considered impure by the Muslims. The Grand Chamberlain kept quiet but when Sirdar Muhabbat Rai insisted on his enquiry, it was whispered in his ear that His Majesty was only coughing.

The interview of the Maharaja lasted about fifteen minutes and the same noises persisted. On return to the Hotel Semeramis, it was explained by the Maharaja that the King coughed like the bark of a dog, due to an operation performed on His Majesty's throat some years ago whereby husky sound emanated whenever he wanted to clear his throat.

The Maharaja and I were decorated by the King with the Order of the Nile but as the Maharaja wanted the highest order of Egypt, "Abbas Halmi" I was asked to see the Foreign Minister of the Government of

Egypt to tell him that the honour conferred upon Maharaja was not in keeping with his exalted position, and that he would feel gratified if His Majesty conferred upon him the Order of Abbas Halmi. I advised the Maharaja not to press for this but the Maharaja was quite adamant. I had to interview His Excellency Abdel Khalak Pasha, the Foreign Minister. But he knew of the object of my visit as the Maharaja had spoken to him at a reception the night before on the same subject. He talked of India and the Indian Princes and the Indian States. He also talked of the tyranny of the British in India and the humiliation to which the Princes of India were subjected to by the British officers.

I was all the time itching to come to the subject of my interview but as a shrewd man, the Foreign Minister would give me no chance to do so. He talked and talked and related stories of the British interference in political life of Egypt and how he managed to keep them in check. It could be seen that he was evading the issue and was gaining time. Half an hour passed by and suddenly he pushed the bell hidden under the table and three officers in Frock Coat and Turbush ushered themselves into the room.

The interview came to an end without giving me an opportunity to mention the object of my visit to the Foreign Minister to the great disappointment of the Maharaja.

## 22 *Visit to Morocco*

**T**HE SULTAN OF Morocco is not only the temporal head of the kingdom but also the spiritual head of the Muslims, he being the head of the Cherifian Dynasty. After the termination of the Caliphate of Turkey, the Sultan of Morocco became the head of Islam throughout the world and this was the reason why the Sultan was revered as the spiritual head of Islam.

The visit to the Sultan of Morocco, Maulay Hafiz-in-Rabar was an event of great interest to the Maharaja of Kapurthala and time and date were fixed to see the Sultan. The Maharaja's car was escorted by a Cavalry Regiment and the French Resident sat with him in the car and in the second car sat his colleagues and I along with Sultan's Chamberlains. The third car was occupied by the aides-de-camp of the Maharaja and the junior officials of the Sultan.

This cortege was followed by many motor cars in which were seated officials of the Sultan.

As soon as we reached the palace of the Sultan we were told quietly by the officers of the French Residency that we should not look up as the Queen and other women of the Sultan's harem were looking at our cortege and it will be against protocol to glance at them.

From the main entrance to the room where the Sultan was to receive us, there were jet black Negro troops lined up with naked swords.

The idea of looking up was removed from our mind not only because we were told by the officer of the French Residency but we thought that if we did look up, our heads would be cut off by the ferocious-looking soldiers holding naked swords.

We were received at the gate by the Lord Chief Chamberlain of the Sultan and were ushered into the room where the Sultan was sitting under a big canopy and there were two empty gold chairs by the side of

the canopy. The Sultan did not even utter a word though the Maharaja and the Resident followed by me and other officials of the Maharaja had entered the hall of audience. The Sultan did not even nod to the salutes and bowing of the Resident. The Resident bowed several times before the Sultan and after bowing low he stood erect and in French language introduced the Maharaja to the Sultan in the following words, 'Your Majesty, His Highness the Maharaja of Kapurthala, the ruler of the Kingdom of an important State in the North of India, has come to pay his salutations and greetings to Your Majesty'. The Sultan did not make any sign and remained dumb.

After a number of speeches made by the Resident, the Court Interpreter spoke in low murmuring voice which could only be heard by the Sultan, translating what the Resident had said. It was only after the Sultan had heard what the interpreter had said that he put his hand out of the large white cloak which he was wearing and shook hands with the Maharaja and made a sign to him to sit down on one of the gold chairs.

The Resident before sitting on the second gold chair introduced me as the Court Minister and the other officers to the Sultan, but we were not given any seat to sit down nor did the Sultan take any notice of us. After the introduction was over, the Resident sat down after bowing several times again. The Maharaja opened the conversation: 'Your Majesty, I have come to greet your Majesty. I am much thrilled to see your kingdom and I thank Your Majesty for the great hospitality which Your Majesty has extended to me and to my staff.'

The Sultan did not say a word in reply till such time that the interpreter translated whatever the Maharaja said to the Sultan. The Sultan said something in a very low tone which could not be heard by anyone but the interpreter said in Arabic that he was pleased with the visit of the Maharaja. This was translated by the interpreter. After this the Vizier and the

Chamberlain who were standing along with us in a row bowed most courteously to the Sultan and the ceremony was over.

The Maharaja bowed and shook the right hand of the Sultan which was hardly visible as it was hidden in the robes which he was wearing. After the Maharaja shook hands I was also asked by the Resident to proceed towards the Sultan to shake hands with his Majesty, but I could only touch his robes as his hands had already gone inside the robe.

The Resident bowed again and again while he was retreating to the door with his face always in front, towards the Sultan and in his great hurry and excitement of retreat his legs jammed and the sword which was fastened to his belt got right into his legs and he fell. The Sultan did not make any fuss about it and no body moved to help the Resident, but soon the Resident recovered from that position and joined the Maharaja who had already walked out of the room and was going back by the same passage lined by Negro troops with naked swords in their hands. In the evening the Grand Vizier and the Chamberlain brought decorations for the Maharaja and myself and pinned them on our chests at an official ceremony.

After the death of the Sultan, his son Sidi Mohammed Ben Yossef, ascended the throne of Morocco. On account of his inclination towards the National Movement, he was dethroned and his place was taken by his 72 year old uncle, Maulay Mohammed Ben Arafa, and Sidi Mohammed was exiled to Corsica. He took with him two of his wives and seven of his dusky eyed concubines.

## 23 *Field Marshal in Brazil*

**B**UENOS AIRES IS a fine modern town with magnificent buildings and smooth well-kept roads. Some of the famous avenues like the Avineda del Mayo contain palatial edifices and wide extensive squares similar to those in the best cities of Europe and are remarkably attractive, whereas the business streets like Florida with hundreds of excellent shops full of curios and articles de luxe from all over Europe are very narrow and crowded. The traffic gets blocked and is rendered still more difficult by the tramway, though in busy centres like this, it is a necessary evil.

To facilitate the transaction of business, such narrow streets are closed to vehicular traffic between four and seven p.m. every day. The Avinida Alvear, the Champs Elysees of Buenos Aires which is by far the most beautiful avenue, is flanked on both sides as far as Palermo, by many fine private palaces and artistic buildings and adorned by rich statuary fountains and other elegant structures.

Maharaja Jagatjit Singh of Kapurthala was well-known throughout the South American countries not only for his wide travels around the world but also on account of his marrying a Spanish beauty from whom he had a son — Maharaj Kumar Ajit Singh — a sportsman and a man of character. The Maharaja could also read and speak Spanish language fluently. He had numerous South American friends whom he often met during his travels in European countries. He also knew industrial and commercial magnates and leaders of political parties who visited the Maharaja at the Capital of his State, Kapurthala, where they were sumptuously entertained. The Maharaja had the knack of extending hospitality which endeared him to those whom he entertained.

After long discussions with the Chairman of Thomas



Cooke & Sons, London, a programme of the visit of the Maharaja was drawn up to tour the South American countries, starting from Brazil and ending by Panama Canal and Cuba in the West and North of South America and Chile. The programme was as follows:—

# ITINERARY

1925

July 25	Leave Bordeaux, French Cie Sud Atlantique s.s. Lutetia.
July 26	Call Vigo, Spain.
July 27	Call Lisbon, Portugal.
Aug 8	Arrive Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.
Aug 8-11	At Rio de Janeiro, 'Hotel Gloria'.
Aug 11	Leave Rio de Janeiro for Sao Paulo, Brazil.
Aug 12	At Sao Paulo, Hotel Kaplanada.
Aug 14	Leave Santos, Brazil, by British Royal Mail Steam Packet Coy's 'Desna'.
Aug 18	Arrive Buenos Aires, Argentine Republic.
Aug 19	At Buenos Aires, during which time a visit will be paid to Monte Video, Uruguay and to the Iguazu Falls.
to	
Sep	Hotel Plaza, Buenos Aires.
Sep	Leave Buenos Aires 9.15 a.m.
	Transandine Railway across the Andes Mountains, 13,082 feet high.
Sep 3	Arrive Santiago de Chill, 11.20 p.m. Hotel Savoy.
Sep	At Santiago de Chill
Sep	Leave Valparaiso, Chili, British Pacific Steam Navigation s.s. Oroya.
Sep 7	Call Antofagasta, Chili.
Sep 8	Call Mejillenes, Chili
Sep 9	Call Iquique, Chili
Sep 9	Call Arica, Chili
Sep 10	Call Mollendo, Peru
Sep 12	Call Callao, Peru
Sep 18	Call Balboa, Panama Canal Zone.
Sep 18	Call Cristobal (Colon) Panama Canal Zone
Sep 23	Arrive Havana, Cuba, Hotel Plaza
Sep 2	Leave Havana, Cuba American Steamer,

		United Fruit Coy's s.s. Calamares.
Sep 27		Arrive New York, United States of America
Sep 28	} to	At New York, U.S.A., Hotel Plaza
Oct 2		
Oct 3		
		French Cie, General Transatlantique s.s.
		France
Oct 10		Arrive Havre, France.

The crossing of Los Andes from Buenos Aires to Santiago de Chile was a remarkable experience. Snow-clad mountains are pierced through by a railway train and such a sight is unique in the world. The sharp cutters attached to the engine were cutting the snow aside from the railway track and the train went up and down crossing the highest mountain in that region.

The people of that region received the Maharaja with enthusiasm at every hill station and offered him and his companions presents and hand-woven articles which are still preserved by us as souvenir of South American tour.

Dr Marcelo D' Alvear, President of the Republic of Argentine, was a man of remarkable ability and he received the Maharaja with the greatest pomp and show at his palace La Casa Rosada. After the inspection of the troops by the President on the Independence Day, the Maharaja's car was surrounded by thousands of people who collected at that Military Review and they all shouted, 'Viva Maharakka'.

South American people knew very little about the history of India and the Indian States. They only knew that the Maharaja of Kapurthala was a king from India and that he should be given reception in accordance with his Imperial status. The Maharaja took a large staff of officers with him including a Sikh who used to be dressed in most gorgeous clothes and with his white flowing beard attracted the crowds who had never seen a Sikh gentleman in their life.

Once in a gala performance given by the President of the Republic of Argentine at the Opera, the Maha-

raja was applauded for several minutes but the chief attraction was his Sikh officer who usually accompanied the Maharaja on such official occasions. At the end of the performance, the Sikh officer by the name of Sardar Inder Singh was applauded by the big crowd inside and outside the theatre. Not only the men, women and children admired the Sikh officer on account of his long white beard and his turban with gold lace and brocade robes and white silk trousers and silk shoes but even the dogs in their laps also looked at the strange man. Some dogs smiled with joy at Sardar Inder Singh as he looked strange to them and Inder Singh was pleased at the welcome which he received not only from the people of Argentine but also from the dumb but excited canine onlookers.

The Maharaja sent me to Buenos Aires a few days ahead to make arrangements for his reception by the Government of Argentine.

When I came from Montevideo on a steamer after several days of journey and reached the port at Buenos Aires, journalists, photographers and cameramen were present in large numbers to greet me. I happened to be standing on the deck waiting for the steamer to reach the shores and I was holding a stick with a gold knob which was given to me as a present by His Highness the Nawab of Rampur. It was flashed out in all the newspapers next morning that Field Marshal Sardar Jarmani Dass arrived in Buenos Aires and had in his hand a baton of the Field Marshal. I was described as the Minister of the Kingdom of Kapurthala in all the leading newspapers of Argentine and was always given great ovation wherever I went. Luckily, no one enquired from me of the strength of the Kapurthala army, which was less than a meagre one thousand, including men and officers!

Many women of exquisite beauty followed me, gazed at me, talked to me, and even stayed with me till late hours in the night. This was not on account of my special manners and physical attraction that I possessed but it was on account of the Military distinction I

held as Field Marshal of the Kingdom of Kapurthala. I did not think it necessary to contradict the news in the newspapers or tell the truth to my friends as I thought it would diminish the enthusiasm of the people for the Maharaja. Several letters and telegrams were sent to me by women of high society couched in most amorous Spanish language.

The South Americans are puritans and their morals, unlike people of other countries in Europe, are high. It is difficult to go out alone with married women in Argentine while unmarried girls of any age would go out even with strangers for dinner, supper or tea, and could even go out for week-ends outside their home town. The men from Argentine are very jealous of their wives and often one sees duels being fought between the lovers of married women and their husbands, resulting in death of one of the two or both. But this did not stop many love affairs between the married women and foreigners visiting the country though they have to risk their lives for indulging in such love affairs.

The Prince of Wales, later King Edward VIII, was also there at that time as the guest of the Government of Argentine and was much intrigued and annoyed to know of the great and splendid ovation and the grand reception given to a ruler of a State in India who was the vassal of the British Crown.

## 24 *Turbans and Treachery*

**H**IS HIGHNESS RAIS-UP-DOWLA, Sipahdar-ul-Mulik, Raja-i-Hind Maharajadhiraj Sri Sewai Maharaj Rana of Dholpur, Lokindra Bahadur, Diler-i-Jung Dev Udaibhan Singh, ruler of Dholpur State in Rajputana, Grand Commander of the Indian Empire succeeded to the throne of his brother, Maharaja Rana Sir Ram Singh, K.C.I.E., who held the honorary rank of 'Captain' in His Majesty the King of England's armed forces.

Maharaja Rana married his daughter to the Maharaja of Nabha, a close relation of Bhupinder Singh of Patiala. His father and the father of Bhupinder Singh of Patiala had exchanged turbans and thereby had become virtual brothers by baptism. The exchange of turbans in India is regarded to be the highest symbol of affection between two persons. The custom of exchanging turbans dates back from time immemorial. King Nadir Shah of Persia got the famous Diamond called Kohinoor from King Mohammed Shah Rangila by exchange of turbans by cunningness.

There were two forms for solemnising brotherhood. One was by the exchange of turbans and the other was to take water from the hand of each other while standing half dipped in water and looking at the sun. This ceremony sanctified the relationship of brotherhood. The Maharaja Rana of Dholpur, though so closely related to the Maharaja of Patiala, was always anxious to harm him politically as well as in family affairs. He opposed his cousin Bhupinder Singh in his election campaign for chancellorship of the Chamber of Princes and carried on a campaign of calumny and hatred against his own cousin. In spite of being defeated at the election, he carried on a political tirade against Maharaja Bhupinder Singh of Patiala backed by the then Government of India and the British Residents and Political Agents whose policy was to weaken the growing

power and prestige of the Maharaja of Patiala. Bhupinder Singh, however, was a wise and shrewd ruler and he could outwit his cousin the Maharaja of Dholpur.

Every time the Maharaja of Dholpur threw out a challenge he was invariably beaten by the Maharaja of Patiala and these tussels brought him utter humiliation. At the end of his political career he began to profess that he was the only ruler who could protect the interests and honour of the ruling princes and he canvassed his brother princes for confederation of the States in opposition to the National Congress and even liberal and other parties.

His idea was that if there was unity among the princes they could thwart the political progress of the country and as a powerful unit they would have a big pull in Indian politics. This device though very shrewd and in the interest of the princes was soon found out. The wise Indian statesmen and leaders, however, opposed this movement openly and it died in its infancy.

In order to enlist the support and sympathy of King Edward VIII of England, the Maharaja of Dholpur wired to Mr. Stanley Baldwin, the then Prime Minister of England, in connection with the marriage of King Edward VIII to Mrs Simpson.

The Maharaja contended that the princes of India approved of this matrimonial alliance and enjoined upon the British Government not to take any action as it might alienate the sympathy and support of the ruling princes of India. Mr Baldwin had already stated in the House of Commons that the position of the King's wife was different from the position of the wife of any other citizen of the country. His wife becomes the Queen of the country and therefore in the choice of the Queen, the choice of the people must be heard.

When Baldwin saw this cable which was sent without the support of the Chamber of Princes, he was much annoyed and passed it on to the Secretary of State for India who in return sent it to the Viceroy.

The Viceroy took strong objection to such a cable being sent direct by the Maharaja to the Prime Minis-

ter of England. The Maharaja apologised to the Viceroy for meddling in the domestic affairs of the Buckingham Palace and His Majesty's Government. As the Maharaja was friendly with the Viceroy and the Political officers and was the henchman of the British Government throughout his life, the Government of India took no action against him. Till the end of the princely order, he went on intriguing against the National Movement in India and was antagonistic to the aspirations of the people. He was not in favour of the country gaining independence and tried to block its growth with all his strength.

The cat came out of the bag when it was found out that he was in league with His Highness Nawab Hamidulla Mahmud, the ruler of Bhopal and his henchman, Mir Maqbool Mahmud, Secretary of the Chamber of Princes, with whom he was secretly negotiating and discussing the political problems of India, as to how the princes should form an empire of their own with the ultimate object of crushing the national aspirations of the people and conquering the whole of India.

He called himself the Vikramaditya of India. The people and his own personal friends laughed at him for his folly. One day he woke up to find that he was no longer the ruler of the State and that the palaces where he lived were to be considered as government property. His privy purse was cut short and he was given one house to live while his favourite palaces and hunting grounds were taken away from him by the Government of India and were converted into public institutions.

## 25 *Ram Piari's tragic end*

**T**ALSHAHI, CALLED THE royal tank, a lake at a distance of five miles from the capital of the State, was the favourite resort of His Highness Maharaja Udai-bhan Singh, Ruler of Dholpur State, for duck shooting and is situated in beautiful surroundings. He also fed tigers and other ferocious animals with his own hands who collected daily to be fed from the hands of the Maharaja who used to go to them in a motor boat. This tank was constructed by the Moghal Emperor Shahjahan about three hundred years ago.

The Palace consisted of several terraces made of cement and marble. These covered terraces were spread over several miles and all the terraces were on the bank of the great lake which is stored up with water, not only by the monsoon rains, but also by water diverted from the various canal weirs.

This artificial tank is about ten miles in area and is well-known for duck shooting. It is here that the Maharaja Rana used to invite Kings, heads of foreign Governments, Viceroys, his brother princes and other distinguished guests. They were not only entertained sumptuously but excellent facilities for duck shooting were provided. It was unique because of the large number of ducks which the guests used to bag during their shooting expeditions. The ducks were bred in such a scientific manner in the reservoirs that sometimes they consisted of a flight of 1 to 1½ thousand ducks at a time. A similar number of ducks came from different sides, from neighbouring areas, in order to enjoy the company of their fellow ducks as well as to pick the food left over for them all over the tank. Trees were grown in the tank for the protection of birds.

Whenever distinguished guests were invited for duck shooting the ducks were disturbed from the tank.



They flew towards the guests of the Maharaja and it was at that time that the guests shot at them and each shot bagged five to ten ducks.

One can imagine the number of ducks which each guest could shoot in a day. The ducks had no chance of escape. At night all the guests who were scattered all round the tank came to the main hall where alcoholic drinks were served together with tasty snacks till dinner time and afterwards the guests were given French wines and other light drinks. After dinner was over, again whisky and brandy was served in plenty.

Generally at these parties the guests brought their girl-friends and mistresses. Even the British Residents who were supposed to keep themselves aloof from Indians in their amorous games were in a different mood whenever they attended such parties and invariably brought with them wives and daughters of friends with whom they were in love. These parties lasted for over a week and men and women became physically and sexually exhausted at the end of these parties.

The Maharaja never drank any wine or liquor but he sniffed the drugs which were kept secretly in a private room, only known to Tirnar Singh, his favourite aide-de-camp. The Maharaja used to say in unguarded moments that he was a woman-hater and that he never cared even for his own wife.

But in these Talshahi parties, he used to smuggle a maid servant by the name of Ram Piari from Agra. She used to meet the Maharaja in one of the far distant bungalows where he was supposed to retire after the shooting in order to show to the world that more than the luxury of the Talshahi Palace he preferred a quiet and secluded life in a simple furnished cottage.

His main attraction was Ram Piari who was hidden in one of the rooms of that house and who was not allowed to see anyone nor go out of the house.

The Maharaja of Dholpur had weakness for simple-dressed maid servants whether married or unmarried. Whenever he saw a maid, whether young or old, beautiful or ugly, his sexual passion was excited on seeing

her in ordinary clothes. At that time he had no control on himself and this invariably led to trouble. He created a scene in Kandaghat as a guest of Maharaja Bhupinder Singh where he caught hold of a maid servant by the name of Phagni, wife of Bagu bearer and it was with great difficulty that the matter was hushed up.

One wintry night Ram Piari had a charcoal burner called an Angithi in her room to keep herself warm. Since she kept all the windows and doors of the room closed, the smoke of the charcoal filled the room and suffocated her and she became unconscious. When the Maharaja unlocked the door he found her in an unconscious state. First the Maharaja tried to conceal this incident but finding that Ram Piari was not regaining consciousness, he called his Palace physician who was enjoying the alcoholic drinks at Talshahi along with his friends.

As soon as the private car of the Maharaja brought the doctor to this private house, the Maharaja received him personally which is not usual for the ruler of the State. As soon as the doctor alighted from his car, the Maharaja whispered a few words in his ears and he was ushered into the room where Ram Piari was dying of suffocation.

The doctor seeing the girl in this state was shocked and said to the Maharaja that it was cruel to keep the woman hidden in such a way with a charcoal burner and without any ventilation in the room. The Maharaja tried to keep him on his right side and promised him valuable presents in order to keep this episode as a secret. But in spite of the best efforts of the doctor, Ram Piari died. This caused much commotion in Talshahi. The Maharaja tried his utmost to hush up the affair but the public came to know of the secret and the scandal spread.

The guests at Talshahi also came to know of this and the doctor who was a jolly fat man could not hide his hatred for the Maharaja for his cruelty. He let out the secret and the guests were also disgusted at the behaviour of the Maharaja and began to leave one after

another for their respective places.

The Maharaja's saintly character was thus exposed and in order to hoodwink the public of his good character and saintly temperament he fasted for four days and afterwards even went to Hardwar for the purification of his sins. He also went to Solan, a town in the Simla Hills, to consult his spiritual Guru and asked him to pray for the condonement of his sins.

## 26    *Quick Disposal of Files*

**H**IS HIGHNESS MAHARAJA Kishan Singh, Ruler of Bharatpur used to ask his Private Secretary Kanwar Bharat Singh to put up all the official files (Memoranda and Petitions) every Sunday morning on a big table for his orders in the Conference Room of the Palace. The table was large enough to seat about a hundred persons and the same table was used for big dinner parties and banquets. Kanwar Bharat Singh on orders from the Maharaja would place all the files of the day on the table which related to murder cases, civil suits involving millions of rupees, appointments and dismissals of high officials of the Government and important personal cases concerning the members of the ruling family and Political Departments of the Government of India. Kanwar Bharat Singh had the instructions to remove them the next day after the Maharaja had dealt with them.

The Maharaja along with the Maharanis and ladies of the harem would come to the Conference Room before dinner on Sunday night. In this room strong alcoholic drinks were served for hours with usual merry-making and before retiring the Maharaja would ask his favourite Maharanis to put the files into two piles. The files on one side were verbally sanctioned by one stroke of the pen by the Maharaja while the files on the other side were summarily rejected without being even looked into. The Maharaja had no inclination or time to look at a single file on the table. Kanwar Bharat Singh in accordance with the verbal orders given at random by the Maharaja recorded his final decision and conveyed them the next day. This resulted in hundreds of innocent people being punished and the criminals let off. Similar was the case with revenue and civil cases of the Government. People who were to get money from their debtors had to go empty handed and in

other cases borrowers became creditors. This travesty of justice caused a big agitation in the State. The matter was reported by the British Resident to the Viceroy who appointed a Diwan (Prime Minister) with full powers to exercise thorough control and the Maharaja became a nominal head of the State instead of a ruler with full sovereign powers.

## 27     *The Fabled Nizam*

**F** AITHFUL ALLY OF the British Government, Lieutenant General His Exalted Highness Asafjah Muzaffarul-mulk Nizam-ul-mulk, Nizam-ud-daula Sir Mir Osman Ali Khan Bahadur, Fateh Jang, CCSI, CBE, the tenth ruler of the line, was installed on the throne of Hyderabad in 1911.

H.E.H. the Nizam's Dominions covered an extensive plateau with an average elevation of about 1,250 ft. above sea level interspersed with hills rising to 2,500 ft. and in one case even 3,500 ft. high. The total area of over 80,000 square miles is larger than that of England and Scotland put together.

The house of Hyderabad was founded by Nawab Asaf Jah Bahadur, the most distinguished general of Aurangzeb.

After long service under the Delhi Emperor, distinguished alike in war and political sagacity he was appointed Viceroy of the Deccan region in 1713, with the title of Nizam-ul-mulk which has since become the hereditary title of the family.

The Moghul Empire was on the verge of decline, owing to internal dissensions and attacks from without. Amid general confusion Nawab Asaf Jah had little difficulty in asserting his independence against the weak occupants of the throne of Delhi, but he had to repel the inroads of the Marathas who were harassing the western parts of his newly acquired territory. His independence was the cause of much jealousy in Delhi, and the court party secretly instructed Mubariz Khan, Governor of Khandesh, to oppose him by force of arms. A battle was fought at Shakarkhelda in the Buldana District of Berar in 1724, and Mubariz Khan was totally defeated and lost his life.

The battle established the independence of Nawab Asaf Jah who annexed Berar and made Hyderabad his

seat.

At the time of his death in 1741 he was established as the independent sovereign of the Kingdom co-extensive with the present Dominions, including the province of Berar.

Nizam means an administrator who was the Governor of Hyderabad during the Mughal period and after the fall of the Mughal empire the Nizam became independent and entered into a treaty with the East India Company.

Later, when the British Power became paramount in India, the Nizam like the other Maharajas and ruling princes of India came under the suzerainty of the emperor of Great Britain.

His forefathers gathered enormous wealth and piled up a huge stock of jewels unparalleled in the history of the world and Nizam Osman Ali Khan inherited all the massive gold bars and bricks, fabulous diamonds, other precious stones and jewellery. Several cellars of his palace were hoarded with jewellery, gold and silver bricks. The keys were always kept by the Nizam himself and he never trusted any officer or servant with the key of the great Vaults of his fabulous wealth.

At an early age, the Nizam of Hyderabad was greatly fascinated with his wealth and he used to count the bricks of silver and gold, now and then.

From his early youth he got full satisfaction in looking at piles of these gold bricks. Having had enormous wealth, not only jewellery gold and silver bricks and other precious articles, he had vast property in land and houses which yielded an income of millions of rupees. The Nizam possessed the famous Jacob diamond which ranked next to the Kohinoor, now set in the Crown of Queen Elizabeth of England.

With all his wealth the Nizam was a miser. He spent very little on himself. The habit of miserliness became ingrained in him more and more with advancing years. He was so steeped in this mania that whenever he invited anyone to his table, the food served to the guests was frugal and insipid. Even for tea he

had barely two biscuits to offer, one for himself and the other for the guest. If the number of guests were more, the number of the biscuits increased in the same proportion. At the royal table the spirit of miserliness was displayed so blatantly that any guest could easily comprehend the mentality of his host. On occasions when he entertained guests at his table, the expenses of which were not borne by his privy purse, he did not display the same trait.

He believed in getting his guests served sumptuously when the expenses were chargeable to the State Exchequer. At official banquets and receptions, the food served was sumptuous in both the European and Indian styles and even alcoholic drinks such as whisky, and he used to offer a glass of champagne to noblemen attending the banquet, sitting far away from him, and on receipt of the glass they would stand up, bow in obeisance several times to thank His Exalted Highness for the mark of Royal Honour shown to them. This meant that the Nizam publicly honoured a particular nobleman on that night and the custom was that the next morning for one cup of champagne which the noble guest had received the previous night, he had to reciprocate by sending him a present worth a hundred thousand rupees.

It became a custom for the Nizam to offer a glass of champagne to six or seven noblemen of his Kingdom at each banquet which meant that six or seven lakhs of rupees were sent to the Nizam, while the champagne was paid for by the State Exchequer. He also used to amass great wealth by sending small presents to the noblemen who in return had to offer him costly presents ten or twenty times the value of the presents sent.

Another trick the Nizam had adopted to extort money was to attend the funeral, marriages and other ceremonies of the noblemen of his State and at such functions the Nizam was presented with gold sovereigns as token of the gratitude His Exalted Highness' gracious visit.



He devised many other ways of extracting money from his subjects, so much so that everybody in his kingdom knew what the Nizam was expecting from a particular person for the honour bestowed on him on some particular occasion.

The Nizam kept jewellery in hundreds of boxes while bricks of gold and silver were kept in large vaults. In later years of life when he had a number of children numbering about eighty to ninety he had each box of jewellery assigned to each of his sons and daughters, but these boxes were meant to be delivered to the assignee only after his death. So, none knew exactly the contents of these boxes except that it was noted down by the Nizam in his own private book kept for the purpose.

At the time of the integration of the States with the Union of the Republic of India, the Nizam was advised by the Government of India that it would be much safer for him to keep his hoarded gold and silver bricks and other jewellery in the safe deposit vault of a bank in Bombay.

The Government of India rightly suspected that this colossal wealth might be misused by the Nizam and his advisers as it was rumoured that the Nizam had planned to get wealth removed by secret methods to Pakistan or to some other country.

A Trust of 46 crores of rupees was created and the jewellery was removed first to the Imperial Bank of India in Bombay but afterwards to the Mercantile Bank of India as the space for placing these numerous boxes and cartloads of gold and silver bricks was insufficient in the Imperial Bank on account of lack of accommodation. The Mercantile Bank of India had to improvise special cellars for the safe deposit of these gold and silver bricks and the jewellery of His Exalted Highness.

The Nizam, in spite of his owning such vast wealth, shed tears of sorrow when he saw them going out of the palace reserve after the "Police Action" and the capture of Kasim Razvi—the rebel leader of the anti-

Indian movement. The Nizam was then obliged to conciliate the authorities of the Union by denouncing the suspected revolt of his own Prime Minister and declaring that he was an ally of the Indian Union and had no truce with Pakistan.

The Government of India taking the Nizam at his word appointed him as the Rajpramukh (Governor) of integrated Hyderabad. This he later relinquished and retired from public life and became a recluse. He seldom came out of King Kothi, where he resided.

His heir apparent, Prince Himayat Ali Khan (Azzam Jah) and his second son, Prince Shujaat Ali Khan (Muazzam Jah) were married to the Turkish Princesses—daughter and niece respectively of the Ex-Khalifa of Turkey—Abdul Majid.

After a few years of married life, Princess Nilofer left her husband, Muazzam Jah, the second son of the Nizam and joined her grandmother, the cousin of ex-king Abdul Majid of Turkey, one of the richest women of Turkey.

Both the Princes received huge amounts as privy purse from the Nizam with the approval of the Government of India but with the creation of the Trust, the Princes were paid their privy purse from the Trust money, while the Nizam himself was paid five million rupees from his landed property as well as some extra amount from the Trust.

With all these multi-millions at his disposal, the Nizam barely spent a few thousand rupees on himself and his numerous concubines who abounded his palace.

Though the Nizam had a large harem and several wives and eunuchs, yet the total amount he spent on his personal establishment and household was much less than any one among the reasonably wealthy class of Bombay and Calcutta.

The dress of the Nizam was very simple. He wore an ordinary shirt and a short loose pyjama. The socks were always sagging while the pyjama was lifted so high that the legs of the Nizam—between the edges of the pyjama and the socks—were always visible. He

had a fez cap for head-dress which it is reliably reported was bought by him about 35 years ago. The cap, though worn out and tattered by constant use over three decades, ever retained its royal master's favour!

The father of the Nizam of Hyderabad was a generous man. He made his subjects happy and was always anxious to effect reforms and elevate their lot and status.

Besides his many queens, the father had a liaison with a woman of ill repute who was the mistress of a Marwari Banker. This woman gave birth to a boy who resembled the Marwari. It was alleged by the collaterals that this boy was brought to the Palace and declared the son of the Nizam. As the boy grew up, he had the character and resemblance of the Marwari, and likewise his habits of hoarding money.

The father after having failed to improve the habits of the son, lodged a complaint with the Government of India that the boy was not his own son and that his two other sons from the legitimate wives, named Salabat Jah and Basabat Jah, were the rightful heirs. These princes had the character and resemblance of their father. Osman Ali, cunning as he was from the very beginning of his childhood, came to know of this plan and started praying that his father should depart from this world. Suddenly his father got seriously ill and died but the boy destined to become the Nizam did not go to see him during his illness and was not even present at his death bed.

When Osman Ali succeeded to the throne he turned out of the palace all the members of the royal family and some of them actually became street beggars. Salabat Jah and Basabat Jah appealed to the British Government to restore to them the kingdom of Hyderabad as they were the legitimate sons of the Nizam and that Osman Ali was a usurper and not the son of the Nizam.

Osman Ali was lucky, as Edward VII, King of England, to whom the case was submitted and who was inclined to favour Salabat Jah and Basabat Jah as the

rightful heirs, died just then. The demise of the King gave Osman Ali sufficient time to manipulate things and through the influence of gold bricks and dazzling diamonds, he got the case of his brothers' brushed aside and himself became rightful and the undisputed ruler of Hyderabad.

The father of the Nizam had given the Hyderabad Palace at Bombay to Salabat Jah but Osman Ali got the house confiscated. Salabat Jah complained to the then Resident about the confiscation of his house who asked the Nizam to return the house to his brother. Tricky as Osman Ali was, he suggested to the Resident that the house should be valued and Salabat Jah should be paid the value as compensation instead of the house. Both the Resident and Salabat Jah agreed to this arrangement and Sir Cowasji Jehangir of Bombay was appointed by the Resident to evaluate the house.

Osman Ali sent his confidential private secretary to see Sir Cowasji Jehangir requesting him to undervalue the house but Sir Cowasji Jehangir being an honest man with great integrity and character turned down his request and the house was valued at Rs. 17 lakhs. Osman Ali after paying this amount from his pocket in great hurry realised that his capital was reduced by 17 lakhs. He got the house declared as Government property.

Later, Salabat Jah died in mysterious circumstances and the Nizam got all his money and property but Basabat Jah continued to get Rs. 5000 per month as his allowance which the Government of India had fixed. This amount was paid from the Hyderabad Exchequer.

## 28     *Nizam and the Butter*

**T**HE NIZAM WAS on very friendly terms with the Maharaja of Datia, a State in Central India. Osman Ali asked him to send him some tins of pure butter for which his State was well-known. The Maharaja of Datia complied with the wishes of his friend Osman Ali and sent him twelve dozens of tins of the purest home-made butter from his palace stock. At the sight of so many tins of butter, Osman Ali was extremely pleased and he ordered that these tins should be preserved in a safe place in the palace godowns. There they remained untouched for two years and the contents deteriorated emitting foul smell, and attracted the attention of the officers in charge of the godowns. No officer or subordinate dared to bring the fact to the notice of the Nizam.

However, Nawab Salar Jung, Prime Minister of Hyderabad State and a man of bold and independent character spoke to the Nizam about the condition of the butter. Even Salar Jung was abused by the Nizam and was sent away.

Immediately afterwards, Osman Ali sent for Mr. Reddy, the officer in charge of the police station of Hyderabad and asked him to go round the temples and sell the butter. The officer was abused when he remarked that the butter was unfit for human consumption and should be thrown away. Osman Ali told Mr. Reddy that though the butter was not fit for human consumption it was good enough for use in temples and placing before the Hindu deities for religious ceremonies.

After seeing the attitude of the Nizam, he bowed and told him that his orders would be executed. As soon as he got out of the Palace gates, Mr. Reddy threw away the tins of butter into a gutter and came back after a few hours beaming with joy and told the

Nizam that the butter was sold for Rs. 201/-. The Nizam was mightily pleased with the services rendered by the officer and credited the amount of Rs. 201/- to his own bank account which already amounted to hundreds of millions of rupees. Mr. Reddy was given a superior post in recognition of his services.

## 29 *Hyderabad Snippets*

**T**HE NIZAM ALWAYS attended the marriages of his officials, their sons and daughters as well as the marriages of the Payagah noblemen of his kingdom. Instead of giving presents to the bride and the bridegroom he used to pick up the most valuable jewellery from the dowry and deprive the married couple of their best jewellery, in the name of kingly condescension.

Whenever the Nizam saw an expensive and beautiful car with anyone in his kingdom, the owner was informed by the staff-officers that His Exalted Highness would like to have a drive in that car. The owner felt honoured at the gesture of His Exalted Highness and sent his car for the royal drive. The car was never returned and was driven to the palace garage to the utter dismay of the owner. Thus he collected a fleet of cars numbering three to four hundred, though they remained unused. Once after integration, the Chief Minister of Hyderabad State asked him to dispose of his two hundred and fifty cars which were rotting in his garage but the Nizam turned down the proposal and instead he spent two and a half lakhs of rupees to get them overhauled, thus displaying his utter self will.

### *THE CIGARETTE STUBS*

The Nizam smoked heavily, but only cheap and ordinary cigarettes. He used to chain smoke, sitting on a sofa for hours. The cigarette ends and ashes of the cigarettes which he smoked accumulated on the floor which he never liked to be removed. Only when huge mass of cigarette ends and ashes were accumulated, the Controller of the Household would get them cleaned up.

Whenever the Nizam was offered a good American,

British or Turkish cigarette by his friends or high Government officials, instead of picking up one cigarette he picked up 4 or 5 cigarettes at a time and put them in his cigarette box while continuing to smoke his own cheap brand.

On one occasion Mr. V. P. Menon, Adviser to the Government of India in the States' Ministry, went to visit the Nizam and after a while the Nizam offered him a Hyderabad made cigarette called "Char Minar" which the Nizam generally smoked and cost him 12 paise per packet of 10 cigarettes. But Mr. Menon did not like to smoke it and respectfully declined the offer. Instead he offered his own cigarettes to the Nizam, saying that His Exalted Highness might try a new brand. The Nizam liked the cigarette and asked Mr. Menon for three or four cigarettes which he kept in his own cigarette box. A few days later when Mr. Menon visited the Nizam again, the Nizam instead of offering him Char Minar cigarettes, offered Mr. Menon the same cigarettes which he had taken from him a few days earlier.

Fabulously rich, his personal jewellery was valued at fifty crores of rupees. The Nizam always kept a list of jewellery in his pocket whether awake or asleep.

He knew exactly how much he had got, in which boxes particular jewellery was kept and where any specific item of jewellery could be traced. No one was allowed to disturb the arrangements without his prior consent. If this was to be done for dusting the room, the treasurer had to explain in a most factual tone, bowing several times that the box was only shifted temporarily to clean the place. The Nizam being suspicious by nature did not trust any of his officers with the jewellery. The treasury was opened by the officer in charge only after obtaining the special keys, which always remained in the custody of the Nizam himself.

### *DIAMOND PAPER WEIGHT AND THE SOAP BOX*

The Nizam of Hyderabad possessed the world famous Jacob Diamond which weighed 282 carats. Its



shape was that of a paper weight but to stave the evil eye he always kept it in a Cuticura soap box and very often he used this diamond as a paper weight on his writing table.

Sir Sultan Ahmed who became the Chief Advisor to the Nizam and advised the Nizam in all constitutional affairs, pleased him a great deal by his services and flattery, in appreciation of which the Nizam allowed Sir Sultan to hold the diamond in his hands for a few minutes. The Nizam's eyes were so fixed on this stone all the time that Sultan Ahmed's hands trembled under the gaze.

### *BERAR LETTER AND THE PRIME MINISTER*

In the great history of Asaf Jah family to which Nizam Osman Ali belonged, there were many instances of bravery and great statesmanship. The Nizam was persuaded by Lord Curzon, the Viceroy of India, at the instructions of the King Emperor of India to give up Berar which formed part of his domains. And the British Resident with his usual diplomatic skill was able to get a letter from the Nizam renouncing his rights on Berar. When the Prime Minister of the Nizam, Maharaja Sir Krishan Parshad was told of this letter, he went and told the Nizam that it was a great misfortune to have accepted the wishes of the British Viceroy.

The Nizam realised his mistake and told his Prime Minister that he should find out ways and means to get back the letter from the British Resident. Maharaja Sir Krishan Parshad made an appointment with the Resident and went to see him. At the interview he told the Resident that he would like to read the letter which the Nizam signed with regard to relinquishing his rights on Berar. He pretended that he would like to keep a copy of this letter for his record. As soon as the Prime Minister got the letter in his hand he put it in his mouth and swallowed it, then and there, in the presence of the British Resident and that was the end

of the letter. Several years afterwards, though the Prime Minister had swallowed the letter, the British got Berar. But the Nizam hated the British ever after. And he seldom missed the opportunity for making his anti-British feelings known.

At the time of his silver jubilee, held in 1937, the British garrison consisting of twenty-four thousand troops wanted to honour the Nizam by marching past him. But after hardly one thousand troops had marched past him, the Nizam told the Commander of the British troops that he would no longer stay there. This was a mark of high discourtesy shown to the British troops and meant another black mark by the Viceroy in his Conduct Book.

On one occasion when he gave a big banquet in which the British Resident and senior officers of the Government of India and noblemen of the "Paigahs" were present, he began to make a speech soon after the first course was served—not ordinarily done until the end of the dinner. The Nizam after making his speech in honour of the Resident left the table accompanied by most of his courtiers while the British Resident and a few other Britishers remained behind to finish the dinner. This was also a mark of high discourtesy towards the British Resident as a representative of the Crown in India.

## 30 *The Spanish Maharani*

**I**N HIS YOUTH Osman Ali, the Nizam of Hyderabad, had peculiar ways of spending his money and distributing jewellery.

On one occasion he heard of the beauty of the Spanish Maharani Prem Kaur of Kapurthala and he invited Maharaja Jagatjit Singh, Ruler of Kapurthala State, to Hyderabad for a couple of days. The Nizam was so fascinated with her beauty that he would not let the Maharaja and the Maharani go away from Hyderabad for several weeks.

Every night at the dinner table, Maharani Prem Kaur found valuable jewels in the napkin placed in front of her and every time she unfolded the napkin she found either a diamond in it or a ring or a necklace or some other precious stone.

The presentation of jewels to the Maharani in this rather a novel way continued for several weeks, but the Nizam had no chance to meet Prem Kaur alone at any time as Jagatjit Singh was most jealous of her and did not allow her to meet the Nizam alone even for a second.

The patience of the Nizam was exhausted and he got his senior Begum to send a message to the Maharani for a reception in her honour at King Kothi. The Maharaja had no objection to the Maharani being entertained by the senior Begum at the palace.

When the car carrying the Maharani, her two ADCs and her lady companion reached the palace, the Head Eunuch Abdul Rehman informed the two Aides-de-Camp that only the Maharani and her French lady companion Mlle Louise Dujon would enter the palace while the two Aides-de-Camp should remain in the room at the entrance of the palace beyond which they were not allowed to proceed.

The Maharani remained in the palace for several

hours to the great anxiety of the Maharaja who started suspecting some foul play but there was no way to ascertain the whereabouts of the Maharani as no message could be sent inside the palace nor received from there.

The Maharani told me confidentially that a few yards away from the entrance gate, the Nizam was waiting for her and escorted her to the palace where the Begums were residing and afterwards entertained her to tea alone in his own palace. However, she did not reveal to me what transpired between her and the Nizam but she seemed to be pleased with the reception accorded to her by the Nizam.

The Maharaja got wild and cursed himself for allowing her to visit the palace of the Nizam and left Hyderabad immediately afterwards and never returned to Hyderabad again. After few months, the Nizam sent a wire to the Maharaja that he would be visiting his State as a return visit but the Maharaja politely replied to the telegram saying that he would be leaving for Europe and therefore he would not be able to receive His Exalted Highness and this brought rupture between the two crowned heads who were both dazzled by the Spanish Beauty.

### 31 *Fountains and Fanfare*

**B**HARATPUR WAS A Princely State in Rajputana, the land of God-descended Princes. Maharaja Sir Kishan Singh Bahadur enjoyed a salute of 17 guns outside the State and 19 guns within the State. The revenue of the State before its merger with Free India was nearly rupees three and a quarter millions. Most of this revenue was spent on horses, cavalry units and bodyguards of the Maharaja and the rest on the royal kitchen and uniforms of the members of his staff, Ministers, officials and even the menial staff. Only less than 10 per cent of the revenue of the State was spent on education, hospitals, roads and other public utility departments.

Seventy-five per cent of the total amount was spent on the uniforms, saddles and equipment of the horses, cavalry regiments and mounted bodyguards band. The Maharaja having been to Europe and having seen the change of guards at the Buckingham Palace, the residence of the King of England, wanted to have similar guards with similar uniforms, but the finances of the State could not bear the expenses of such regal glitter.

He took delight in buying the best horses and decorating them with the finest leather saddles, embroidered with precious metals. The uniforms of the bodyguards were a mixture of the ancient and the modern styles copied from foreign countries.

The Maharaja spent lakhs of rupees, with the connivance of the British Resident and the Viceroy, and to the great delight of the British tailors, Phelps & Co. and Ranken and Co., who made the uniforms for the Maharaja's bodyguards. These uniforms were now and then replaced by new uniforms according to the pattern which the Maharaja saw in France, Germany or elsewhere.

The pageant was no doubt superb in grandeur when one saw the march past of the mounted guards with an orchestra on horse back with big Indian drums and musical instruments.

An instance of this vain glory is found in the most resplendent uniforms made of brocade with gold and silver cords which the six rickshaw pullers of Sir Kishan Singh Bahadur wore. Phelps & Co., the well-known tailors of Simla, made them at a cost of Rs. 50,000. The Maharaja immensely enjoyed riding in the gaudily decorated rickshaws during his summer resort in Simla.

Besides this and the colourful mounted bodyguards, the Maharaja had also a Cavalry Regiment who were dressed up on ceremonial occasions in most gorgeous and colourful costumes, with their flashing lances, and jackboots with stripes of gold and silver.

All this paraphernalia robbed the State of almost its entire income derived from various sources such as excise, land revenue and other taxes generally levied from the middle class and the poor.

The Maharaja after spending lavishly on guards and cavalry regiments ran into debts, and it was not till the State was almost bankrupt that the British Resident interfered in the administration of the State.

The Resident sometimes pleaded with the Maharaja to stop wasteful expenditure on uniforms and bodyguards, but he saw no reason why he should not have cavalry regiment and bodyguards when his brother princes, the Maharaja of Gwalior, maintained his own Madhorao Scindia Lancers; the Maharaja of Mysore had Mysore Lancers; the Maharaja of Jodhpur had Sir-dar Risala and the Maharaja of Jaipur had the Kachhawa Horse.

The Resident told the Maharaja, 'Your Highness, these Maharajas can afford to keep the cavalry units, the bodyguards and the band.' The cavalry regiment was accordingly disbanded. This came as a shock to the Maharaja and he began to develop tuberculosis, which brought an end to his life within a short period. So grieved he was by not having any troops to march

past him, in gorgeously dressed uniforms.

Bharatpur was well known for its beautiful palaces and fountains. When all the fountains were at play, the Central Hall surrounded by the fountains became as cool in summer as days and nights in winter, when the heat outside in summer months rose to a temperature of 114 degrees.

The Maharaja used to sit in the Central Hall with all the fountains playing and enjoy the cool breeze coming through the fountains. The arrangements made for fixing up all the fountains were such that it gave the appearance of rain falling in an area of hundreds of yards around. This kept the palace cool and pleasant.

It was in this festival palace that the Maharaja used to celebrate the Holi festival. He along with the courtiers and members of his family used to sprinkle coloured water on each other as well as rub dry colours on the faces of each other. The other festivals also used to be held there when the Maharaja and the ladies of the court enjoyed participating to their heart's content.

In this palace there were high trees protecting the Central Hall from the scorching sun in the summer and often the Maharaja used to sit on a tree like a parrot having improvised a small bed between the two trees. The Maharaja used to see the fountains playing from his bedroom and the water rising higher than the trees. It gave him a feeling of being in an air-conditioned room while perched on his bed atop the tree.

He also had a novel way of taking food. On the roof of this palace he had red stone chairs and tables in semi-circles numbering about 200, covering the space with furniture made of stone. There the Maharaja used to preside over dinner parties to which most of his intimate friends and members of the staff were invited.

The only light available was the one from the moon or candles which burnt in wooden ornamental stands. The Maharaja spent on these dinners a great deal of State money. These entertainments lasted the whole

night with most expensive intoxicants of all kinds, followed by dances and songs by the celebrated court dancing girls.

He used to hold six big durbars or official receptions at every change of season and for each durbar special uniforms had to be worn by the courtiers. For instance on the Basant Festival, there were saffron coloured uniforms from head to foot, on Teej Festival in the monsoon season the colour was bright red; on Holi it was snow white; and in winter the uniforms were of blue and green. The women folk also dressed in the same colours and the people in the streets vied with each other in copying their Maharaja's whims.

The condition of the State was as dismal as the court was gay. The roads were badly maintained, as they were not repaired for many years, and hospitals were without qualified doctors and nurses on account of inadequate remuneration for their services. There was no proper judiciary in the State, as competent judges would not accept the post for a meagre or no salary. There were no scavengers and sweepers in the State to look after the sanitation of the city. Municipal Corporations and Committees were not functioning for lack of funds. There was complete chaos in the State and no administration worth the name was functioning.

Before the advent of British Power in India, Bharatpur was an independent State and was founded by a Jat freebooter named Rustum, about the end of the 17th century and Bharatpur became the capital about the year 1733 A.D. It was Lord Combemere who succeeded in making Bharatpur a vassal of the King of England.

Exactly after one hundred years, Maharaja Kishen Singh Bahadur made the State absolutely bankrupt by his extravagance.



## 32 No Appetite

**M**AJOR GENERAL HIS Highness Maharaja Sir Hari Singh, Indar Mohindar Bahadur Sipar-i-Sultanat, G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., K.C.V.O., Aid-de-Camp to King Emperor of India George V, Ruler of Jammu and Kashmir invited the Resident, the representative of the British Government in India and his wife to the Palace for dinner. About 500 guests were invited to this dinner which was given in honour of the British Resident and Lady Reginald Glancy. Before the time of the banquet, the guests arrived but the Maharaja was late by one hour.

When His Highness finally came, he was dressed in Plus Fours coat with closed collar and baggy trousers, usually worn for shooting, with his boots covered with mud, as he came straight after fishing trout in a rivulet at some distance from the palace. Hari Singh did not apologise for being late to the Resident who expected the Maharaja to be there before his arrival to receive him. As soon as the Maharaja entered the drawing room, the Resident and the guests were introduced to him with whom he shook hands. The Resident was dressed up in political uniform—gold buttons and decorations, while the Indian guests were dressed either in Achkans (Indian national dress) or Western evening dress—in tail coat and white tie.

The aigrettes and jewels of Their Highnesses the Maharaja Tukoji Rao, Ruler of Indore, and Raja P. Singh, ruler of Poonch State and other ruling princes who were also invited to the banquet were flashing. They wore loops of real white and black pearls round their necks.

The banquet hall was tastefully decorated. Marble columns looked gigantic. From the roof hung chandeliers in hundreds, all lit up splendidly. The Maharaja did not look very happy as he told some of his

confidential courtiers that he did not like the Resident.

After the usual serving of drinks and snacks which the Maharaja did not take, the guests went to the big dining room where tables were laid for 500 guests and the Maharaja's chair which was made of gold and silver was at the top of the table and on his right was Maharani Shamishta Devi of Indore, former Miss Nancy Miller, an American lady. On the other side of the table, Her Highness the Maharani of Kashmir perisided and on her right was Sir Reginald Glancy, the Resident and on the left, Maharaja Tukoji Rao and other guests sat at the table in order of the warrant of precedence.

The food was served in big gold and silver plates and it took about half an hour for the waiters to put the big plates on the tables in front of the guests. It was customary that the Maharaja should start eating before the guests could take their food.

When the food was served and the Maharaja was expected to start eating, to give signal to all the guests to begin, he did not touch the food, but he suddenly got up and said, 'I have no appetite.' He walked out followed by his Indian guests and never returned to the banquet hall. The guests departed without taking food and there was no arrangement for them to satisfy their craving for food elsewhere at that time of the night.

Sir Reginald and Lady Glancy left the capital next morning in disgust, without intimating the Maharaja of their departure, and reported the incident to the Viceroy who informed the King Emperor, George VI, of the great discourtesy shown by Maharaja Hari Singh to the British Resident whose status equalled to that of an Ambassador in a Foreign Court. As a matter of fact, his status was superior even to the foreign emissaries in an Indian Prince's Court, as he was there to represent the Paramount Power.

The Maharaja's explanation was called for by the Viceroy. To that the Maharaja never replied.

### 33 *A Nautch Girl at Indore*

**M**AHARAJA TUKO Ji Rao Holkar was educated at Dally College, Indore, a Chiefs' College like the Aitchison Chiefs College, Lahore, Mayo College, Ajmer, and Raj Kumar College at Rajkot. The products of these colleges were of uneven calibre.

The type of education imparted in these institutions was such as to create a big gulf between the rulers and the ruled. The princes and chiefs who came out of these colleges were mostly degenerates. Generally these colleges were controlled and run by the British. The Principals and senior professors were mostly British, though the junior teachers and religious teachers were mostly Indians. The boys were educated in such a religious atmosphere that on stepping into life they were imbued with ideas of communalism. Different houses of worship were set up in the college compound. For instance there were separate mosques for Muslims, temples for Hindus, churches for Christians, and Gurdwaras for the Sikhs. Religious education was considered an essential part of their training.

British statesmen insisted on rigid religious education to the students in these colleges, in order to make the future rulers of the States communal minded. This was done with the idea of training them in separate religious groups. The "Divide and Rule" policy of the British was fully at play in these colleges.

The boys coming out of these colleges became addicted to all manner of vice and particularly from the very childhood they got used to alcohol. The attendants of these princes, who were generally the relations of the Maharajas, used to initiate them to drinking and they used to bring liquor from the shops and fill them in sodawater bottles to avoid detection and bury the bottles in the garden.

At night when the tutors were away to their clubs

for dinner and dances, these bottles were opened by the young princes, who got intoxicated and thereby became addicts to drinking at an early age. These institutions were far different from Harrow and Eton in England. In these Chiefs' Colleges, the sons of the rulers were treated in royal fashion while the sons of the Sirdars were treated differently. The same system of bowing and flattering the princes by the sons of the Sirdars from the early years of their lives grew up. Even when the princes were not of mature age, they had the complex of being superior, as the Sirdar's sons bowed and the servants touched their feet in reverence in the same way as in the case of the Rulers.

When Maharaja Tuko Ji Rao grew up, he had a meglomania of being a great king. He secured privileges and concessions from the British Government which the other rulers did not enjoy. He was allowed a British Guard of Honour and an Ambassador to represent his Court in Delhi. He became swollen-headed and began having differences of opinion on political matters with the British Residents and the Viceroys of India. He lost all balance of mind and began to criticise openly the British Government in India. He even went to the extent of referring political cases of his Government to the Privy Council in England in appeal, open to the Princes for the redress of their grievances.

The Prince of Wales who afterwards became King Edward VIII and later abdicated in favour of his brother who was crowned as King George VI came to India and was invited to pay a visit to Indore. At a Banquet the Maharaja went out of his way to praise Kaiser William II of Germany and his German army chiefs, much to the chagrin of the Prince of Wales. Thus the relations between the Government of India and the Maharaja became strained and since then the British tried their utmost to bring about his downfall.

The Maharaja had his weaknesses, particularly for women. He brought from Amritsar a beautiful and talented dancing girl, Mumtaz Begum, to his palace

in Indore. He was infatuated by her and after some time he was passionately in love with her. Mumtaz on her part did not care for the Maharaja and tried to escape several times but being well guarded she could not do so.

Ultimately, when the Maharaja was going to Mussoorie, a hill station in the Himalayas, by a special railway train, she escaped from her compartment at Delhi, with the connivance of her relatives who met her at Delhi railway station and quietly took her back to Amritsar. In the escapade the guards were bribed. The Maharaja, on learning the next day at Dehra Dun where the train halted, that Mumtaz had left the compartment at Delhi, became furious and some of the guards attending on her at that time were dismissed and others were sent to prison. The Maharaja quickly returned to Indore and was much grieved at losing Mumtaz Begum to whom he had lost his heart.

After some time the mother of Mumtaz Begum took her to Bombay where she met Mr. Bauwla, the Mayor of Bombay, who kept her as his mistress. The Maharaja's courtiers thought that the best way to please the Maharaja and obtain precious gifts from him would be to remove Mumtaz by force from Bombay and bring her back to Indore.

Bauwla, not knowing of the plot, used to go for a drive every evening to the Hanging Gardens and the courtiers of the Maharaja knew the time and place which Bauwla and Mumtaz used to visit regularly. Two or three motor cars belonging to the Government of Indore were seen near the Hanging Gardens along with some officers of the Indore Government which included the Inspector General of Police. They stopped Bauwla's car and tried to take away Mumtaz forcibly, but Bauwla had a revolver and he fired at the men who were trying to abduct Mumtaz. The officers in self-defence fired at Bauwla and in this skirmish Bauwla was shot dead. While Mumtaz was being dragged into car, two British Artillery officers who were sightseeing, arrived on the spot, immediately after

the murder and the police and other officers of the Indore Government were caught red-handed and arrested on the spot.

The British thus got an opportunity to punish the Maharaja as he never was submissive to them. A judicial enquiry was ordered and the Maharaja was given the choice either to abdicate in favour of his son or face the inquest.

The Maharaja after consulting his Ministers and the noblemen of his State decided to abdicate in favour of his son Jaswant Rao Holkar, as he thought that he would be hopelessly implicated in the murder case. The Inspector General of Police turned an approver to gain the favour of the Resident, Sir Reginald Glancy.

The diplomacy of the British Resident, Sir Reginald Glancy who was asked by the Viceroy to see the Maharaja and get the letter of abdication signed by him was typical of the British. The Maharaja received him in his palace with all courtesies and official ceremonies to which the British Resident was entitled in accordance with the protocol. After shaking hands with the Maharaja, Sir Reginald sat on at a special dais in the drawing room next to the Maharaja and took out a letter drafted by the Political Department of the Government of India and asked the Maharaja to sign it. The Maharaja was sad and calm and signed his abdication. After the signatures were taken Sir Reginald shed crocodile tears and wept almost like a child and came out of the palace in that apparently depressed state.

On coming out he saw the Maharaja's flag flying at the Palace. He immediately wiped off his tears and told the Aide-de-Camp on duty to have the flag removed as the Maharaja was no longer entitled to it. In order to humiliate the Maharaja further, several matters regarding his personal jewellery, privy purse and his personal properties were kept in abeyance. Maharaja Jaswant Singh Ji Rao, his son, was favoured by the Viceroy and the British officers and a quarrel ensued

between the father and the son and poor Tuko Ji Rao, now the ex-ruler, had to look up to his son for favours.

Life took a new turn when he married Miss Nancy Miller, an American woman of remarkable beauty, character and ability. She was most popular amongst her friends and relatives and much admired and esteemed by them. It was only on account of her that the Maharaja could spend his years of exile in happiness and peace. The Maharaja lived with his wife one and a half miles away from the Mannek Bagh Palace with his several children, some of whom got married to the sons and daughters of ex-rulers of Indian States.

Though no longer a ruler, he maintained a court of his own and lived in great dignity and royal splendour. One could see from his looks that he was a scion of the great Maharattas and the spirit of his ancestor, Sivaji Rao, was alight in his heart.

One of the causes of his further annoying the British was his friendship with Maharaja Jey Singh of Alwar who was of an eccentric and cruel nature. He was anti-British and had annoyed the Viceroy extremely and also the British Resident by his rebellious speeches and acts. He was openly in revolt against the British regime and therefore Tuko Ji Rao's friendly alliance with the Maharaja of Alwar made the British officers more suspicious about his loyalty to the Crown of England.

The Residency, where Sir Reginald lived, was some miles away from the city of Indore and was situated on a high plateau with a large garden attached to it. The Residency had its own military gaurds and establishment. There were many houses in the compound of the Residency for the Secretaries and staff of the Resident and the Maharaja had no legal jurisdiction in that area which was administered in accordance with the British laws. Privileges allowed to the British Residents in that area were greater than those ordinarily enjoyed by foreign Ambassadors in an independent country.

The Bauwla murder case was interpreted in the newspapers in different ways but the facts detailed above are authentic, as they have been narrated by a most intimate friend and relative of the Maharaja who was in the good books of Maharaja Tuko Ji Rao. He knew exactly how the plot was hatched to bring back Mumtaz.



## 34     *All Over Blue-Eyed Rachni*

**H**IS HIGHNESS FARZAND-I-ARJUMAND Aqidat-Palmand Rupduman Singh, Maharaja of Nabha, reigned over Nabha State which was situated in the Punjab.

The Punjab State came into existence after the death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the King of the Punjab. Though the rulers of the Phulkian States were related to each other as cousins, there was constant rivalry and feud between them, particularly between Maharaja Bhupinder Singh of Patiala and Maharaja Rupduman Singh of Nabha. They fell out on account of the abduction of a girl by the name of Rachni, by the officers of the Maharaja of Patiala from a village on the border of Nabha State. She was taken over the boundary of Nabha State into the territory of Patiala.

Rachni was the daughter of a farmer and had a beautiful face and slender body with golden hair and blue eyes which was unusual for women of the Punjab to possess.

The Maharaja of Patiala saw her for the first time by chance while on a visit to Nabha. He saw a wild antelope near the road and shot at it but missed it and the animal ran away. The Maharaja ordered his motor driver to chase it across the country; ultimately the antelope was shot dead near Masana village and men, women and children came to see the kill. It was then that the Maharaja happened to notice Rachni who was in the crowd.

It was a case of infatuation at first sight. Messages were sent to her parents many times to bring the girl to Patiala but the parents refused to obey the summons of the Maharaja. Finding that such persuasion and requests had failed, Rachni was kidnapped with the help of some Sikh military officers and was brought to Patiala where she lived at the palace as one of the numerous concubines of the Maharaja. This led to

estrangement of relations between the two Maharajas.

Rupduman Singh, Ruler of Nabha, retaliated and kidnapped many women from Patiala. This led to further friction between the two Maharajas. At one time armed forces were sent by the Maharaja of Nabha and clashes between the armies of the two rulers took place resulting in many casualties in these skirmishes.

The Government of India intervened in the bloody dispute and appointed a commission to enquire into the case and make recommendations to the Viceroy who was to give the final decision as to which of the two Maharajas was guilty of the serious crime of murder, arson, anarchy and bloodshed. The enquiry lasted two years and ultimately the Viceroy gave his verdict in favour of Maharaja Bhupinder Singh of Patiala. Rupduman Singh was asked to abdicate in favour of his eldest son.

The Agent to the Governor General, Colonel Minchin was asked by the Viceroy to convey to the Maharaja his decision. Colonel Minchin rode on horseback and entered the precincts of the Palace with a battalion of armed British Infantry and a detachment of mounted bodyguards, specially brought from Ambala Cantonment — a Military Garrison. Maharaja Rupduman Singh was informed of the visit of the Agent to the Governor General but he did not come out of the Palace to meet him. Inside the Palace arguments were going on whether the Maharaja should surrender or give fight. Colonel Minchin shouted out in anger, 'Oh, Akali, come out'. The British Government was suspecting his complicity with the Akalis, an anti-British movement of the Sikhs which was afoot in those days in India. When Rupduman Singh saw that Colonel Minchin had arrived guarded by a British Infantry Battalion, he surrendered and was at once taken outside the State to Ambala in a closed car. From there he was taken to Kodaikanal in South India where he lived for many years and died in exile.

## 35 *A Junagadh Bitch that was a Princess*

**H**IS HIGHNESS NAWAB Sir Mahabet Khan, Rasul Khan, G.C.S.I., K.C.S.I., Ruler of Junagadh State in Saurashtra, had an eccentric mind and in every walk of life it was noticed that he was quite different from the ordinary human species.

One day he took into his head to get his bitch named Roshanara mated, whom he had brought up from her birth in much luxury and comfort. It was known all over the State that she was the pet dog of the Nawab who never left her alone day and night.

There is a proverb in Persian language that a dog close to a king is better than men at a distance. When Roshanara became of mature age and had to be mated, the Nawab commanded his Prime Minister Sir Allah Baksh that the marriage should be solemnised in a manner befitting a royal Princess.

Invitations were accordingly issued not only to the Maharajas, Rajas and other distinguished members of the Princely order, but also to his personal friends in the Government of India including Lord and Lady Irwin, the Viceroy and Vicereine, the Agent to the Governor General and his wife. Almost all the invitees accepted the invitation except the Viceroy and his Consort as they thought that the occasion was unprecedented and ridiculously foolish and silly.

On the day of the marriage, Roshanara was bathed in perfumes and scents and was decorated in precious jewels. Then she was brought to the Durbar Hall where the marriage was to take place with the male Golden Retriever named Bobby which belonged to the Nawab of Mangrol, Ruler of State of Mangrol. A pearl necklace and other jewellery was put round the neck of the bitch while the male dog was wearing gold bracelets on his feet and huge massive gold necklaces round his neck. He was also wearing some silk and

embroidered cloth round his waist while the bitch remained in the natural state. The bridegroom's party was received by the Nawab of Junagadh at the railway station accompanied by 250 male dogs in gorgeous clothes and jewellery who came in procession from the Palace to the station on elephants with silver and gold howdahs. The Ministers and officials of the State and the members of the Royal family of Junagadh were also present at the station to receive Bobby, the bridegroom. Red carpets were spread at the station and guard of honour presented arms to Bobby who was then taken in procession to the Durbar Hall for marriage.

State holiday was declared for three days and all citizens and visitors numbering about fifty thousand were entertained with all meals, consisting of rich food. The novelty of the entertainment was that food was supplied to all citizens and guests at their residence by special wagons and trucks, three times a day, morning, afternoon and evening, while the rulers and the distinguished guests were entertained more lavishly with sumptuous food and songs by beautiful dancing girls from Baroda, Bombay and Indore.

The priests were called in to perform the marriage and they did so in the same way as is usual in the case of the marriage of a royal princess. The ceremony took place in the presence of 700 courtiers and distinguished guests from all over India. Important ruling princes and prominent guests who came by special trains in the bridegroom's party witnessed the marriage ceremony with great excitement.

The marriage was followed by a banquet at which the seat of honour was given to Roshanara on the right hand of the Nawab and next to her sat Bobby. Special food was served to the bride and the bridegroom who participated in the banquet in the same way as others who were invited to this function.

The Press representatives were also present and many films and photographs were taken which were later published in most of the papers in India and abroad. This was a sensational marriage which ter-

minated by the declaration of the Nawab that he would increase his kennels by 100 more dogs, 80 females and 20 males and thus the kennel swelled to nearly one thousand in number. The favourite Roshanara, whose marriage was celebrated, was treated with special consideration throughout her life — special food, costly velvet cushions and furnished air-conditioned room while poor Bobby after the consummation of marriage was thrown into the kennel along with the other dogs.

Following the observance of the festivities on this occasion, several rulers, like Ranbir Singh of Jind and Bhupinder Singh of Patiala, started celebrating marriages of their dogs and it became quite a fashion, particularly in the north of India, to celebrate such festivals in a most pompous manner.

## 36     *King of Dacoits*

**B**HUPAT, THE MONARCH of murderers, had over seventy murders to his credit or discredit before he was apprehended by the police. The police, in this case, which actually captured him and sent him to the lock-up was the Pakistani police. He was hounded out of Indian borders and forced to seek shelter in Pakistan by the pluck of a gallant Indian officer, Shri Ashwani Kumar. This is a part of the post-Independence blood drama in the princely area of Saurashtra.

It was not, however, the design to push him out of the country. The plan was to capture all his hide-outs in the deserts and marshy expanse of the Indo-Pakistan border and force him to surrender. To carry out this plan a large police force was deployed under the command of Shri Ashwani Kumar.

Bhupat was chased from place to place. Intermittently he crossed and re-crossed the Indo-Pakistan border many times.

This game of terrible hide and seek continued for about five months, when suddenly the people read in the newspapers that Bhupat had been arrested by the Pakistan police in Sind. While this news gave lot of relief to the harassed people of the area, the police authorities wondered how this could have happened and how Bhupat and his gang came to possess the resources to elude the Indian police successfully for so long.

Thereby hangs a tale. Some of the former rulers of the erstwhile Kathiawar states who did not take kindly to the Government of India merger move, abolishing the States, hit upon Bhupat, the professional dacoit and gangster, to wreak vengeance on the authorities responsible for law and order. They financed his gang and persuaded him to start a campaign of loot and arson.

Bhupat complied with the wishes of his paymasters so meticulously that Saurashtra became a land without law, the most insecure place in India. The entire countryside was terrorised and murders became common. Some former rulers felt happy and gave lot of money to Bhupat whose establishment alone cost him three hundred rupees a day.

As soon as the news of Bhupat's escape to Pakistan was received in India, the Government of Saurashtra started rounding up people alleged to have abetted his activities and helped him to cross the Indian border. It was no surprise that among the hundreds of persons arrested, there were as many as eleven princes and their henchmen. It became clear then that riding on the crest of lawlessness, these chiefs expected to regain some of their lost glory. Some of them publicly indulged in anti-national activities.

The conspiracy of these princes was exposed early enough to checkmate chaos, otherwise India might have been called upon to pay a much higher price for their liquidation.

As the general election drew nearer the landed gentry and the dethroned princes resorted to the method of employing dacoits to wipe out and terrorise their opponents in Saurashtra. This was with a view to capture the legislature of Saurashtra and to form their own Government with princes and their pets. It is of interest to read an eye-witness account of Bhupat's raid on a village. In one of the June issues of a Bombay newspaper, its staff correspondent reported, "The murderous swoop of notorious Bhupat on the lonely little town of Burwala had the sole purpose of wiping off a family of six brothers, one of whom was a political worker whose crime was to excite the peasants against feudal oppression. Two of the brothers were shot dead after the fiends cut off their noses. This is how it happened.

As the sky was loaded with first clouds of the monsoon, six men rode into a field at the outskirts of the little village Dedarda, a few miles away from

Burwala. The men wore khaki clothes, carried modern arms and their leaders wore a solar hat. Before the surprised peasants could ask any questions, the leader asked them to bring them food.

As the food was being brought, the murderers kept the children of the peasants covered with their guns. After eating they put all the peasants in a hut, kept close watch on it and relaxed. Their destination was not Dedarda but the nearby Burwala.

By four in the afternoon they asked the frightened peasants to prepare the cart and they rode into Burwala as the sun was about to set. They inquired about the house of Popat Lal, the man who had become an eyesore to the Taluqdars (landlords). Entering the house they found that their victim was not in the town as he had gone to Jasdan.

Posing as policemen, they asked that they should be shown the licences of the arms that Popat Lal kept. When the guns, catridges and the licences were brought they quietly took possession and declared: "We have come to wipe you all out because of you Popat Lal."

Bhupat then revealed his identity, smashed up photos of Gandhiji and a spinning wheel and demanded that all valuables be handed over to him immediately.

At the time only two of the six borthers were in the house, Kanti Lal (34 years) and Chhota Lal (36 years). The evening meal was being cooked in the house. Bhupat picked up a smoking piece of firewood and threw it at Kantilal. Thus burnt, Kanti Lal saw that death had paid him a visit and there was no escape now. He decided to fight it out with the murderers. There was very little he could do but he defied his killer and there was a scuffle. Soon the armed gangsters overpowered both the brothers and with knives they cut off their noses. The women of the house came and pleaded with the killers to let the men go but it was of no use. They said they had come to avenge on Popat Lal for his anti-landlord activities. They wished to set an example to all who dared raise their voice against the privileged Girasdars.



Both the brothers bled profusely. Soon the killers shot them dead. Chhota Lal was fired upon six times. The room became a pool of blood. Satisfied with their kill, they played the gramophone and the radio for some time. One of them remembered an uncle of Popat Lal and soon they left to get him. The wife of the unfortunate man rushed forward and covered her husband with her body: 'Kill me first if you wish to kill him', she said firmly. The dacoits were flabbergasted. In the entire career of Bhupat's murderous raids there was hardly a case when he was resisted by a woman who barred his path for a kill. Thereafter Bhupat decided to let the man go and left for some more loot at another uncle of Popat Lal. There they looted ornaments worth 2,500 rupees.

Two more brothers of Popat Lal escaped their fate with death. Kalidas was just about to enter the house where his brothers lay slain. When he heard the noise he jumped into a forty feet deep well. The fall caused him grave injuries and he lay unconscious till the villagers rescued him after Bhupat's departure. He was sent to the local hospital.

Anoop Chand heard of Bhupat's arrival at the entrance of the town and escaped. After the orgy of death-dealing loot and music, the dacoits burnt Popat Lal's shop and as night fell, they disappeared into the darkness."

Whispers were flying like wild fire over Saurashtra that Bhupat and his co-thugs were not alone in their murder mission but behind them were not merely the Girasdars but certain important rulers of erstwhile States as well. The name of Maharaja Digvijay Singhji of Navanagar-Jam Sahib was alleged to be clandestinely mixed up in gangsterism. This was the reason why the police had failed to track down this monarch of murderers.

## 37     *Gaekwad's Stick and the British Sovereign*

**H**IS HIGHNESS FARZAND-I-KHAS Daulat-i-Inglishia, Maharaja Sir Sayaji Rao Gaekwad, Sena Khas Khel Shamsher Bahadur, G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., Maharaja of Baroda, was a Maharatta ruler of an important State in the south-west of India. He was known for his independent political views and he had immense dislike for the British, though he was brought up and educated by Mr F.A.H. Elliot of the Bombay Civil Service, who was engaged as the tutor for him.

The British Government had serious political differences with him and he was warned several times that if he would not mend his ways, he would have to abdicate.

When King Edward VII came to India to celebrate his coronation in 1911, Maharaja Sayaji Rao at the time of being presented to the Emperor at a big Durbar in Delhi was most discourteous to him. Instead of walking down and bowing before the King in the usual courteous manner in the Public Durbar, the Maharaja took a stick with him and while he was walking towards the dais where the King Emperor was seated on a gilded royal throne the Maharaja saluted him with the stick instead of bowing low before him and he returned to his seat whirling his stick.

He also did not follow the etiquette and the protocol by retracing seven steps backwards while facing the King Emperor before turning back nor was he dressed in accordance with the instructions issued by the Viceroy to the Princes attending this Durbar. Instead of wearing the formal dress with jewels and decorations and proper regalia he came in a simple white coat and loose trousers, and a Maharatta style turban on his head. This was considered as a deliberate insult to the Emperor who seemed visibly annoyed and the

British officers' blood was boiling. The Princes though stupefied by such boldness were giggling in their hearts for the flagrant insult to the Emperor by one of their brother Princes.

Explanations were asked from the Gaekwar who had the title of Farzand-i-Khas Daulat-i-Inglishia—"The most favoured Son of the British Realm"—by the Viceroy of India for his misbehaviour and discourtesy shown to the Sovereign. The Gaekwad got out of the difficulty by saying that as he was the second Ruling Prince to be presented to the Emperor, the first being the Nizam of Hyderabad, he did not know in what manner and form he was to present himself before the King.

Evening newspapers in London printed in bold letters, "Gaekwad insulted the King". In London, when the film taken on this occasion was shown at the Scala Theatre, the spectators shouted: "Shame, shame, hang the traitor, depose him..." There was an uproar in the hall and it was with great difficulty that calm and order were restored.

It was of course known afterwards that the Gaekwad of Baroda acted in this way intentionally as he wanted to insult the King Emperor publicly and show his resentment for having been forced to present himself before the king in this humiliating manner, which he thought was derogatory to his ancestral position, as the head of the Maharattas who were once the rulers of India.

## 38 *Cabinet Meetings in Water Closet*

**H**IS HIGHNESS THE Nawab Sir Syed Mohamed Hamid Ali Khan Bahadur was the Ruler of Rampur State — the sole surviving representative of what was once termed the Rohila power. The British Government gave him the title of Ali Jah, Farzand-i-Dil Pazir-e-Daulat-i-Englishia, Mukhlis-ud-Dowla, Nasir-ul-Mulk, Amir-ul-Umra, Grand Cross of the Star of India, Grand Cross of the Indian Empire and many other decorations and honours. The reigning family of Rampur are 'Syeds' and are descended from the family of Saadat of Baroda in Muzaffarnagar District in Uttar Pradesh. His Highness was well known for his aesthetic taste and was very well versed in Urdu and Persian literature and was known for his lavish hospitality throughout India. He lived in the magnificent Khas Bagh Palace whose one wing was reserved for distinguished guests, his brother princes, relatives of the Nawab, the Viceroy and the visiting monarchs and other celebrities from all over the world. The Indian food supplied to the guests in this palace was superb. The European food cooked in the palace kitchen was likewise excellent and could only be surpassed by the continental food prepared and served in the palace of the Maharaja of Kapurthala where great culinary experts from France were engaged permanently.

At Kapurthala palace, ordinary drinking water was not considered good enough and the spring water from Evian — Les Bains in France was regularly imported, not to speak of the choicest wines and liquors which were always in ample supply. Similar was the quality of food and other beverages supplied to the guests at the palace of the Ruler of Rampur.

During the visit of His Highness Maharaja Jagatjit Singh of Kapurthala to Rampur, there were daily banquets where the most exquisite dishes, both Euro-

pean and Indian, were served in a very attractive manner, which by itself added zest to one's appetite. Although the Nawab himself abstained from taking alcohol, yet he had no objection to his guests indulging in it to their heart's content.

Generally during the dinner parties, the Nawab used to predominate the whole scene by this sharp wit and racy remarks. Not only was he well versed in politics and social science, but he also had a huge vocabulary of abuses in Urdu and Persian languages. One night at a banquet table, the Nawab began to boast that he would ask any one at the table to compete with his Punjabi, Urdu or Persian abuses. Five or six guests including some of the officers of the Maharaja of Kapurthala, particularly Dr. Sohan Lal, the palace physician, took up the challenge and the contest in uttering abuses began in right earnest. The Nawab went on uttering abuses in different languages and continued to do so for nearly 2½ hours and his vocabulary of abuses was still unexhausted, while the other competitors had come to the end in the first half an hour or so. The Nawab thereby wanted to show that not only he was master of the Persian, Urdu and Punjabi languages but also could express himself fluently on any subject including the rhetoric of vulgar phraseology.

The Nawab's love for India and the people was deep. Once a passing remark by the palace physician Dr. Sohan Lal touched him to the quick, who had said that the European women were prettier than the Indian women. The Nawab on hearing this remark lost his temper and asked the Physician in most abusive language how he dared partake of his hospitality and at the same time abuse the Indian women in this manner. He quoted verse after verse from different authors from the time of Mahabharata up to the present time, where the poets had eulogised the beauty and charm of the Indian women. In a fit of temper and excitement, the Nawab left the table in spite of the repeated requests of the Maharaja of Kapurthala not to take to

heart a casual remark made carelessly by his palace physician. The Nawab came back to the table only after Dr. Sohan Lal had left, not only the table, but the precincts of the palace and had departed for an unknown destination. He was in fact ordered to return to Kapurthala as a punishment for his uncalled for remark derogatory to the honour of the Indian women which had annoyed and irritated the Nawab. This was done to appease the Nawab who thought it was an affront to him to hear such views which were irritating and annoying to him.

The Nawab was known for dispensation of princely hospitality to his guests. It was the general custom in the State for each guest to be supplied with a bottle of Scotch whisky and a tin of the best quality cigarettes arranged in a basket of fresh fruits. These were taken round by a long line of bearers and distributed to each of the guests in the different rooms in the morning and was sometimes repeated by a similar offering in the evening before the guests retired to their rooms. These were presents for the minor officials and junior guests while in the case of distinguished guests cases of champagne, whisky, as well as exquisite scent bottles from Lucknow and the French perfumes were presented daily. It was evident that the guests could not consume all the liquors and fruits during their short stay, and so these were carried back by them for their use.

The administration of the State was run very efficiently, though most of the Cabinet meetings took place in the toilet room, where the Nawab used to sit on the water closet for about two hours in the morning and the same number of hours in the evening. As most urgent State work was to be conducted, there was no alternative for the Prime Minister, Sahibzada Abdul Samad Khan, who was the father-in-law of the heir-apparent to the throne, but to approach the Nawab at his leisurely hour while he was in the water closet for holding the Cabinet meeting. The seat of the water closet was designed by the Chief Engineer of the State in such a way that the Nawab could sit comfortably

on it without being detected by the members of the Cabinet. The meeting was conducted in the usual manner and the Nawab used to convey his final orders to the members of the Cabinet for execution. It may be mentioned that the particular seat on the water closet was in the form of a raised pedestal and it could not be detected that the Nawab while handling important State work was also answering the call of nature, mornings and evenings. These meetings were held twice a week, though the Prime Minister saw the Nawab on other days as well, in his grand and spacious toilet room seated there in all his glory.

## 39     *Lunatics as Advisors*

**A** MEETING OF the Chamber of Princes was to be held in November for the election of the Chancellor. Such an election took place every year. His Highness 1008 Sir Bhupinder Singh, the Ruler of Patiala, Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes for many years offered himself again for election. Generally such an election was uncontested. But this time His Highness Maharaja Rana Udaibhan Singh, ruler of Dholpur a cousin of the Maharaja of Patiala, expressed his desire to stand for election for the Chancellorship. Many efforts were made to dissuade the Maharaja of Dholpur from standing for election, but he remained adamant. A letter was sent by the Maharaja of Patiala to Maharaj Rana Udaibhan Singh of Dholpur saying that the latter would be responsible for creating a family feud if he were to oppose publicly his cousin in the election. The Maharaja of Dholpur was supported by the Political Department of the Government of India, and he was convinced that with the active assistance of the British Residents in the Indian States and the Earl of Willingdon, the Viceroy of India, he would succeed in his election.

The election date was fixed and a regular campaign was started for securing votes on behalf of the two contestants. There were 108 active members of the Chamber of Princes but in reality all members of the Chamber never attended regularly the sessions of the Chamber of Princes, particularly the Princes of some of the bigger States like Hyderabad, Mysore, Baroda, though they were regular members of the organisation. They sent their respective representatives to watch the proceedings and to report to them about the proceedings in the Chamber.

Maharaja Bhupinder Singh appointed a Committee to canvass votes for his election. It consisted of Mir



Maqbul Mahmud, Foreign Minister of the Government of Patiala, Maharaja Narain Singh and myself. The members of the Committee decided to take different areas for the campaign. Mir Maqbul Mahmud went to the South of India, Maharaja Narain Singh to the Kathiawar States and I was deputed to U.P., the Central India and Punjab States. Jaora was one of the States which came under my sphere of action.

Special provision for funds was made by the Maharaja for this campaign, which not only covered the railway fares and ordinary hotel expenses and food, but also the heavy expenses required for winning the support of the Maharajas and their advisors. In some cases huge sums had to be given as a temptation for getting votes. In many cases even when a Ruler of a State had taken some hush money as gratification, he voted against the Maharaja of Patiala. The votes of the Rulers were snatched away while they crossed the floor to cast the vote in the ballot box. The Earl of Willingdon, Viceroy of India, presided. The Maharaja of Dholpur snatched the voting paper from the hands of the Maharaja of Charkhari which he meant to put in the ballot box for the Maharaja of Patiala.

In many cases the Committee members had to travel by private aeroplanes, special motor cars, launches and ships to fulfil their mission. The Maharaja's own private plane was placed at the disposal of the Committee. A heavy expenditure was incurred for such a campaign. From Kashmir in the north to Cape Camorin in the South, the members had to travel to plead the cause of their master.

The Maharaja sent a wire to Lt. Col. His Highness Fakhar-ud-Dowla, Sir Mohammed Iftikhar Ali Khan Bahadur Salabat Jung, Nawab of Jaora, a State in the Central India near Ratlam, informing him of my visit to Jaora. As no reply was received to this telegram, it was understood that I would be received cordially and treated as the guest of the Ruler. The Nawab in fact did receive the telegram but did not take any notice of it, and when I reached Ratlam Station, about

20 miles from the palace there was no motor car to transport me to the capital of the State. I enquired of every motor and taxi driver at the station whether any motor car was deputed for my journey, but it transpired that none was sent to Ratlam for this purpose. As there was no conveyance at the station, I managed to get into a slow train which was leaving for Jaora and it took four hours for a journey of 18 miles. It was night time when I reached the destination and I found no transport there also to take me to the palace of the Nawab. Nor there were any taxis and so I engaged a tonga to drive me straight to the palace. The Private Secretary and the Aide-de-Camp in waiting to the Ruler ignored the receipt of the telegram from the Maharaja of Patiala about my visit. As a matter of fact they were definitely rude in their behaviour towards me and were not willing to make any arrangement to put me up for the night. I felt much annoyed at the treatment meted out to me by staff officers and wired to the Maharaja of Patiala about the attitude of the officials towards me and the hostile atmosphere that was prevailing there at that time.

With the help of Mr. Macnab an Englishman whom I had known from Bombay for a long time and who happened to be there at that time I could get a bed for the night in one of the rooms reserved for him. I told Mr. Macnab who was an intimate friend of the ruler, the prince and princesses, about the object of my visit to Jaora. Mr. Macnab used to bring ham and bacon from Bombay every three or four days to the palace for His Highness the Nawab, royal princes and princesses. Mr. Macnab promised to help me in conveying my message to the Nawab. It may be mentioned that ham and bacon were forbidden to be eaten by the Nawab and the princes and princesses according to the tenets of the Moslem faith, but being very tasty they ate it with relish. Mr. Macnab was the agent for such supplies secretly and so he became a man of great confidence at the court of Jaora. He had ready access to the Nawab, the Begum and other members

of the family at all times of the day and night. He was going about the palace rooms as if he was a kith and kin of the Ruler.

Mr. Macnab being aware of my mission to Joara was good enough to go to the Nawab and spoke to him directly, although the Nawab had already heard of the arrival of the emissary at the Capital.

At the intervention of Macnab, the Nawab granted me an audience the next day at ten in the morning. I entered the audience hall escorted by an Aide-de-Camp in uniform and saw His Highness the Nawab sitting on a golden high-necked chair on a dais. His ministers sat on chairs in one row below the dais while the heir apparent and other princes of the royal family sat on gilded chairs in a row on my right side. The entire gathering numbered about forty persons. An empty wooden chair was there in one corner behind the row of members.

There was complete silence as I entered the hall and not a word was uttered by anyone assembled there. The Prime Minister pointed out the empty chair to me. After bowing several times to the ruler, who hardly responded in return, I took my seat and immediately began to explain the purpose of my visit. The Nawab knew fully well that the Maharaja of Dholpur was also a candidate for the election along with the Maharaja of Patiala. I explained how the Maharaja of Patiala would prove useful to the Princely order, while his rival in the election would not be able to safeguard their interests. It was further explained by me that the Maharaja of Dholpur was merely a show boy of the British who wanted to intimidate the ruling princes to have him elected as their Chancellor. After I had exhausted my eloquence in support of the candidature of the Maharaja of Patiala, I expected that either the Nawab or his Prime Minister would say something to approve or disapprove of the proposal made by me, but this was not the case and there was no response from any quarter.

At this time six middle aged, uncouth looking and

shabbily dressed men were ushered into the hall and the Nawab and the Ministers all stood up to greet them. They squatted on the floor and were gesticulating. I did not know the significance of the arrival of these visitors nor I was made any wiser about their sudden appearance. They began putting thumbs in their mouths now and then, inserting fingers in their nostrils and some of them even started dancing. All this appeared very comic and now and then the visitors were casting rude looks at me. The Nawab asked them what they thought about the proposal made by me, which I was asked to repeat at length for about an hour. After hearing all this, the six men went on gesticulating and two or three of them began to wave their hands as if they were opposing the proposal and others looked as if they were disinterested. In between one of them even threatened to beat me with a stick which he was carrying.

Seeing all this performance, the Nawab got up and informed me that his advisors refused to let him vote for the Maharaja of Patiala. The interview ended abruptly and I was asked to retire. I was, however, perplexed to know what actually happened. Mr. Macnab who knew all the secrets of the Nawab told me confidentially that these six men were brought from the lunatic asylum and the Nawab administered the State affairs according to their advice. The Nawab was convinced that these men from the mad house would give their unbiased opinion, sincerely and faithfully. It was also revealed to me by Macnab that these men do not speak but only make signs by which the Nawab takes the hint to come to a final decision about the State matters. I also verified it from some other sources and came to know that the Nawab consulted these lunatics even in murder cases as well as in civil and revenue cases.

The Nawab finally voted against the Maharaja of Patiala, but in spite of that the result of the contest was that Bhupinder Singh was elected as Chancellor by an overwhelming majority.

## 40 *Craze for New Bank Notes*

**H**IS HIGHNESS MAHARAJA Paramjit Singh Bahadur of Kapurthala remained heir apparent till the age of 63 and when he succeeded his father Maharaja Jagatjit Singh Bahadur of Kapurthala after his death, the ruling princes had already lost sovereign powers having surrendered their ruling rights to the Government of India in 1947 and so Paramjit Singh never reigned and he was a frustrated Prince, whiling away his time in travelling to and fro Europe in the company of his Mistress Stella Mudge.

One of his novel hobbies was to collect unused brand new currency notes straight from the Reserve Bank and he was ready to pay any price for such notes. His Highness came to Delhi and met me and asked me whether I could help him to get brand new notes with all my influence in the metropolis. I already knew his weakness for new notes and said to him, "Yes, Your Highness, I can help you in this matter, but it will cost you 10% on the total value of notes as many people have to be entertained before I could lay hands on such notes." His Highness readily agreed to my terms and gave me one hundred thousand rupees in notes of one hundred rupees and asked me to get nine hundred notes of rupees one hundred. I approached a friend in the Reserve Bank who assured me that he would get me as many brand new notes as I required. He immediately brought me nine hundred brand new notes of rupees one hundred.

When I presented him nine hundred fresh notes his face became red with joy and he embraced me and said, "You are really a devoted and loyal Minister of the House of Kapurthala." This process of bringing fresh notes from the Reserve Bank continued for years. Then again the notes which were new on that day became old afterwards and they had to be changed into new

notes on the same terms and ultimately Paramjit found that this method of accumulating currency notes led to considerable flow of money from his reserves but still his craze for new notes was not diminished in any way.

## 41 *The Tragedy of Errors*

**T**EHRI GARHWAL STATE is situated in the Himalayas in Uttar Pradesh. Its ruling family are Panwar Rajput of Agnikula (Fire Race). The first ruler of the line was Raja Kanak Pal who belonged to the Dharangaree family and in 688 A.D. he founded this Garhwal Dynasty.

Maharaja Narinder Singh Shah was born on 26th May 1921, the 60th direct male lineal descendant from Raja Kanak Pal. His father Major His Highness Raja Narinder Shah, K.C.S.I. was born on August 3, 1898 and succeeded his father, the late Highness, Raja Sir Kirti Shah Bahadur, K.C.S.I., on the 29th April 1913. On the 4th of October 1919 he was invested with full ruling powers. He was educated at the Mayo College at Ajmer. In 1916 he was appointed as Honorary Lieutenant and on 4th of October 1919 he was promoted to the rank of Captain; on 2nd January 1922 he was given K.C.S.I. and with effect from 17th January 1920 he was promoted to the rank of Major and later he was made K.C.I.E. His Highness was attached as an Honorary officer to the 18th Garhwal Rifles.

The State has an area of 500 sq. miles. This State was formerly a very big one extending upto Tibet on one side and U.P. and Punjab on the other side and had a big and strong army of its own. On account of an incident which was sheer bad luck for the rulers of Tehri Garhwal, the greater portion of the territory of the State was annexed by the British in lieu of their helping the ruler of the State against the invasion of the King of Nepal.

It is said that the ruler of Tehri Garhwal sent a message of goodwill and friendship, with Mangtu, the son of his High Priest to the Chief of the Gurkhas. Mangtu went to Nepal with presents and gifts from the ruler of Tehri Garhwal to the ruler of Nepal. It was

a usual custom in those days that the presents were escorted by bodyguards on foot or on horseback and usually a small army, fully armed, followed the royal ambassador and the gifts.

When after many marches the priest reached the Palace at Kathmandu, he was seen by Vijaya, the daughter of the High Priest of the King of Nepal, from the balcony of her Palace and she immediately fell in love with the youthful looks and charm of the young priest. With the help of her companion, who was the daughter of a noble man in the kingdom, she bribed the messenger of the Court of Nepal who was taking the message to the King by taking away the parchment which the priest from Tehri Garhwal had brought for delivery to the King of Nepal and she inserted a few words on this parchment indicating that it was the desire of His Highness the Maharaja of Tehri Garhwal that there should be matrimonial relationship between the two houses of the priests of Tehri Garhwal and Nepal and this can be effected by the marriage of the son and heir of the High Priest of Tehri Garhwal with the daughter of the High Priest of Nepal.

As soon as the document was received by the King, the Ambassador of Tehri Garhwal was summoned in and he presented to the King the gifts and presents which the Maharaja of Tehri Garhwal had sent to the King of Nepal, as token of affection and friendship for the King of Nepal and the people of that kingdom.

His Majesty the King of Nepal was pleased to receive the gifts and he was also further pleased that a matrimonial relationship between the young man and the daughter would further cement the friendship and affection between the two States. Mangtu was treated with great courtesy and attention. Mangtu did not know why such favours were shown to him till one day when the King proposed to him the hand of Vijaya—the daughter of the High Priest of Nepal. Mangtu was very much perplexed though he felt honoured. He never even dreamt that he could ever marry the daughter of the High Priest of Nepal.



After many months' stay in Nepal, Mangtu expressed desire to return to his home specially to pay homage to his own ruler, and the King consented to the request of Mangtu. Proper arrangements were ordered to be made to escort Mangtu and his consort back to Tehri Garhwal and the King also sent gifts and presents for the Maharaja of Tehri Garhwal as a mark of great friendship and affection for him. In order to give further honour to the bride and the bridegroom, as well as to enhance his own prestige in the eyes of the rulers of Tehri Garhwal and the people inhabiting that State, the King ordered an unusually large force in the form of bodyguards to escort Mangtu and his bride and to protect the gifts and presents from being looted on the way by bandits. A small battalion of about 1,000 strong fully equipped Gurkha soldiers was sent to the Tehri Garhwal state as a part of Mangtu's retinue.

As soon as Mangtu left the borders of Nepal, rumours were afloat in Garhwal that the King of Nepal had sent an army to invade Tehri Garhwal and has appointed Mangtu as the Commander-in-Chief of his army. When Mangtu with his army reached about a hundred miles from the capital of Tehri Garhwal, the Maharaja got alarmed and ordered mobilisation and sent a strong army to fight Mangtu whom he considered to be a traitor. Poor Mangtu kept on sending messages after messages to the Maharaja that he had not come to fight against him but to pay his homage to him but the Maharaja would never believe that Mangtu was still loyal to him. A pitched battle ensued between the two forces and at the first skirmishes, many casualties occurred on both sides. After several days of fighting Mangtu and his wife were killed by the forces of the Maharaja of Tehri Garhwal and the small contingent of Nepal surrendered. As soon as the King of Nepal came to know of this massacre and the great humiliation which the Maharaja of Tehri Garhwal had brought on him he sent a big army under the command of the Commander-in-Chief.

It was at that time that in order to save his State

and his life, the ruler of Tehri Garhwal sought the help of the British Government in India and with the help of the British army forced back the army of the King of Nepal but in gratification for the services rendered by the British Government in India, the Maharaja had to surrender large portion of his territory to the British which included regions of Dehra Dun, Mussoorie, Saharanpur and other towns such as Hardwar and Rishikesh.

It was a matter of great misfortune that the rulers of Tehri Garhwal in their whimsical moods went on making mistakes after mistakes till the State was reduced to a small one which was afterwards integrated with the Indian Union.

## 42     *Ominous Cockatoo*

**N**ARINDER NAGAR, the capital of Tehri Garhwal, was built at a great cost by Raja Narinder Shah after his own name.

Tehri, the former capital of Tehri Garhwal, is situated on the banks of the Ganges in the interior of the Himalayas about 60 miles from Rishikesh, a sacred place of the Hindus at the foot of the Himalayas. This was the capital of the rulers of Tehri Garhwal for centuries and it had magnificent buildings, municipal halls, judicial courts and palaces for the residence of the rulers and their families. It has extremes of climate, hot in summer and cold in winter, but all round the year it is never so hot nor so cold as could be unbearable.

In every corner of Garhwal you find fine women with beautiful half closed and dreamy eyes, with ebony complexion and well shaped noses and slender and lovely necks with an excellent figure from head to feet. Several generations of rulers before Maharaja Narinder Shah, had died before attaining the age of 30 and this scared Maharaja Narinder Shah. He felt that he may also have to die before attaining the age of 30. He consulted his advisors and high priests and after long conferences with the saints, sages, advisers, and astrologers, he came to the conclusion that he should change the capital to some other place and leave his historical palace and capital. It should be remembered that it was only the rulers of Tehri Garhwal who died before attaining the age of 30 but the vast majority of men and women residing in that part of the country had long life showing thereby that these Royal deaths had nothing to do with the climate or surroundings of Tehri. These deaths at early age had psychological effect on the minds of the Maharajas.

Narinder Shah built another capital and invested all his accumulated wealth and by taking loans from

the Government of India and his brother princes and other sources he built Narinder Nagar. He built a most beautiful capital with magnificent palaces for himself and palaces for his two Maharanis who were sisters. After the death of the first Maharani the second Maharani Kamlendu Mati, now called Kamlendu Mati Shah, became the favourite of the Maharaja and he built for her a beautiful palace over the ridge called Ridge Palace which overlooks the sacred Ganges and is surrounded by huge and dense forests for miles and miles. The Maharaja also built several houses for his Ministers and officers of his Government as well as for the clerical and menial staff. He went to the extent of building barracks at Narinder Nagar for an infantry of 500 soldiers which is a mile away from the Palace. Thus two towns were built, one for the civilian population and the other for the military contingent. Vast amount of money was spent on roads at his own expense throughout his territory spending the last penny of his treasury. He not only looked after the interests of the members of his family, ministers, officials but also was careful to see that the common man and woman gets as much comfort as possible. He laid down a well-designed market on the top of which were built rooms for the residence of shopkeepers and their dependents. No doubt this ruler did well for his subjects and for himself and his ministers and officers, but this was done with a view to prolong his life by changing the capital.

Narinder Shah with his Maharanis and his court began to live in Narinder Nagar happily and invited the high officials of the Government of India and rulers of other states and princes periodically to Narinder Nagar where he entertained them most lavishly. Being close to the plains, the guests relished the idea of spending their week-ends in the glorious and gorgeous surroundings with plenty alcoholic drinks and sumptuous food cooked in Indian and European styles. Excursions were made by these rulers and officials of the Government of India into the interior of Tehri

where he also built small palaces for the comfort of his guests as well as for spending his holidays with his Maharanis. Folk dances by men and women were the chief pastime of the Maharaja and his guests.

Though he wanted to live at least for one hundred years, yet his fate was different. He was celebrating the Dusshera festival at Tehri which was usually celebrated there keeping the old traditions of Tehri Garhwal State and he was to reach Tehri at 5 p.m. for setting fire to the effigy of Ravana, the demon King of Ceylon. When he was about to leave at 9.30 a.m. for Tehri to participate in this religious ceremony, as the ruler of Tehri State, the Junior Maharani informed him that her favourite pink parrot got frightened by the dogs and flew away and could not be traced in spite of her blowing whistles which used to bring the parrot back to the cage on previous occasions. She was in agony on losing her talkative parrot which she had brought up from its birth with great tenderness and care.

Here it may be stated that the ruler of the State on the Dussehra festival day goes to the fair to burn the effigy of Ravana in great pomp and show with all the army at his disposal as the personification of Sri Ram Chander, the God King of India, who killed Ravana, the King of Lanka, on the last day of the battle between the armies of Sri Ram Chander and Ravana over five thousand years ago. The ceremony is never supposed to be complete unless the ruler of the State sets fire to the effigy with his own hands. So it was indispensable that the ruler should be present at the ceremony. Forgetting that time was short and that he was to cross fifty miles of difficult mountainous roads with dangerous corners to get to Tehri for the festival, he got out of the car and began to search for the parrot in the forest. After an hour's search, the Maharaja came back without the parrot. When the Maharani saw him coming without the parrot, she began crying and weeping. The love of the Maharaja for his Maharani was so intense that he could not bear the thought

of her crying and in order to please her he returned again to the forest to search for the parrot. Ultimately the Maharaja was tired by going up and down the hill in search of the parrot. He was terribly exhausted when he got into the car to go to Tehri to perform the function of burning the effigy of Ravana. It was already very late when he started for Tehri and he was driving the car hurriedly. At Tehri several thousands of people who had come from long distances were standing around the effigy of Ravana waiting for the ruler to come and set fire to it and see the end of the great demon king of Lanka who in history was known to have brought havoc to India by constant invasions and looting.

The car had hardly gone a 100 yards when it struck a stone, turned over and fell into the precipice. The Maharaja was killed but the Maharani and others in the car were saved.

This ill-fated capital did not let the Maharaja live long though he did not die of a natural cause. Local poets write sad love lyrics which are still sung in the streets of Tehri and Narinder Nagar.

## 43     *The Mirs and the Honours*

**T**HE STATES OF Hunza and Nagar were ruled by Mir Sir Mohamed Nazim Khan, KCIE and Mir Sir Sikan-der Khan, KBE. These two states, separated from each other by river called Hunza, are situated in the Gilgit province in Kahmir.

For administrative purposes, formerly the State of Kashmir was divided into four provinces: (1) Jammu (2) Kashmir (3) Ladakh and (4) Frontier Province of Gilgit, comprising the settled districts and the political agency covering the outlying districts and principalities of Hunza, Nagar, Punnial, Yasin and Ishkoman.

In all the four divisions, Governors were appointed by the Kashmir Government to carry on the administration but in Gilgit the pattern was a bit different owing to the presence of a Political Agent—a representative of the British Government. The outlying districts which though under Kashmir Government with the rulers subsidized by the Kashmir Durbar to whom they paid tribute, come in due course to the exclusive beat of the Political Agent. It was this sort of dual Government coupled with the strategic importance of the place that resulted in the eventual slipping away of the trans-Indus portion of the Gilgit province from the control of Kashmir in 1935, on a lease of 60 years to the British Government in India.

Gilgit, therefore, has rightly been termed the Gibraltar of India and used to be called the brightest jewel in the crown of the British empire in India. It has great value strategically which always kept the British authorities in India trying to get the region out of the control of the Dogra Government of the Maharaja and many were the tricks employed diplomatically to take this important territory directly under British control in its relation to the frontier problem as a whole.

This story relates to the time when the British power

in India was at its highest and when the British decided to take over the territory of Gilgit from the Maharaja of Kashmir, more in view of consolidating their frontier across the boundary of Gilgit than for the sake of prestige. It will be evident from this narration that the dual Government had been set up in Gilgit. On one side was Kashmir Government with its revenue, judicial and executive staff and on the other side was the Political Agent, a British Officer of the Political Department, usually a military man of picked political intelligence, reinforced by a staff of British officers exercising supervision over the medical staff and the military and a battalion of local scouts taken from different parts of the country. But it was mainly from Hunza, and Nagar even though Yasin, Punnial, Gilgit and Astor were represented. The dual system seems to have worked fairly satisfactorily. The Kashmir Governor was the chief executive as well as the judicial head of the administration in the settled districts of Nomal, Gilgit, Saï, Bunji, Astor etc., besides being His Highness the Maharaja of Kashmir's personal representative to hold Nazar Durbars and other functions, while the political agent held jurisdiction in the border areas contiguous to foreign countries like Russia, China and Afghanistan. In the settled districts a regular record of rights existed and judgements of some officers were appealable to the Governor while the frontier crimes regulation and Jirga system prevailed in the outlying districts of Chiles, Yasin, Punnial and Ishkoma with a certain amount of sovereignty vesting with the Mirs of Hunza and Nagar. All the local chieftains together with the Chiefs of Hunza and Nagar acknowledged the suzerainty of the Maharaja of Kashmir to receive the subsidies and honoured the Kashmir Governor as the representative of their liege Lord, the Maharaja of Kashmir. Matters of mutual interest and importance between the two sections of the country, i.e., the agency of wazarat were discussed and settled between the Governor and Political Agent, whenever necessary. The working of administration went on smoothly for generations but confusion cropped up when the heads



of Government fell out on questions of prestige. However, it can be safely said that the people of the country continued to enjoy peace, prosperity and justice.

The British Government always tried to please the rulers of Hunza and Nagar in many ways and the most powerful weapon they used, to have these rulers in their grip, was to bestow upon them titles and honours.

The British Government played the same game with the Maharajas and Nawabs. Besides British and Indian honours, such as Order of the British Empire, Order of the Star of India, Order of the Victorian Order and other distinguished orders and numerous honorary titles of the time of the great Mughals were bestowed upon the rulers such as Beloved Son of the Government of Great Britain, A Pillar of the Empire, Dignity of the Kingdom, Light of the British Empire, Kings of Kings, Giver of Joy to the Heart, Brave in Battle, Great and Esteemed Maharaja, Chief of the Army of the Country and Vice-regent of the Kingdom.

On the recommendation of Colonel S. A. Smith, the Resident and the Viceroy of India, His Imperial Majesty the King of England and Emperor of India bestowed upon the Mir of Hunza, the exalted title of KCMG in June 1921 while His Imperial Majesty conferred upon the Mir of Nagar on the 1st of January 1923, the honour of KBE. KCMG means Knight Commander of the Indian Empire while KBE means Knight Commander of the British Empire. Both these rulers were anxious to know which of the two titles was superior and each of them complained and fretted that the other ruler got better and higher title. On account of this obsession, jealousy between these two rulers grew and they became more and more hostile to each other.

In spite of the fact that the British Resident explained to these rulers that there was no difference between the two titles and that he was satisfied that the King Emperor bestowed upon them titles which have equal value and distinction, they were not satisfied by the assurances given by the British Government in Gilgit. Pandit Wazir Ram Rattan, an able administrator,

was the Governor of Gilgit at that time and he wielded great power and prestige in that region on account of the implicit confidence which the Maharaja had in him. On account of his ability and impeccable character, both the Mirs came to see the Governor secretly and asked him which title was superior and also told him that an assurance was given by the Resident and the Viceroy of India that both rulers were to be treated alike whenever any honours were to be bestowed upon them. Pandit Ram Rattan was a tactful and shrewd diplomat. He received the rulers one by one separately. He told the Mir of Hunza that he had four letters to his honour, i.e., K.C.I.E., while his brother prince Mir of Nagar had only three letters, i.e., K.B.E. After the interview the Mir of Hunza left the Government house quite satisfied that he scored over his brother prince in receiving better and more exalted title at the hands of His Imperial Majesty, the King Emperor and there were great rejoicings in his State to celebrate the occasion. When this news got around Nagar, the Mir of Nagar sought an interview with the Governor to clarify the position. He was all smiles when the Governor told him that the Mir of Hunza has only an Indian title while the Emperor conferred upon him the highest British title and told him that the British titles were superior to the Indian titles. The Mir of Nagar also celebrated the occasion by illuminating his Palace and the streets of his Capital and lavishly threw gold and silver coins and ornaments to the public from the balcony of his Palace.

By such a shrewd handling of the situation by Pandit Ram Rattan, the Governor, the political crisis was thus averted.

## 44 *Cleopatra at the Palace*

**M**ILLE GERMAINE PELLEGRINO of French nationality was brought up and educated from her childhood by Mr. Reginald Ford, a multi-millionnaire businessman, residing in Paris.

In the month of September in 1930, Germaine was holidaying in Cannes on the Riviera in the South of France where His Highness Maharaja Jagatjit Singh of Kapurthala State and I annually went for the very reason.

Wealthy people from all over the world, famous cinema stars, presidents and kings gather there for the swim, sun and sport. Streets are full of men and women in shortest transparent swimming costumes and colourful pyjamas. Cannes is known all over the world as one of the most fashionable holiday resorts with casinos, luxurious hotels and clubs. The beach is long and beautiful and it is a grand panorama to see this beach full with bathing beauties scantily dressed with silk laces to cover their middle parts just to keep the regulation against nudity.

After strolling along the sea side for a while the Maharaja and I entered a dressmaker's shop—Couturier, where a tall and pretty girl of ivory complexion, and a nose with striking resemblance to Cleopatra's symmetrical beautiful nose, dressed in pink silk pyjama suit was talking to one of the sales girls. The Maharaja looked at her with devouring eyes and winked at me. Germaine took no notice of us though she heard us talking to each other in whispering tones. The Maharaja told me how happy he would be to meet this charming beauty. He immediately went to the Proprietress Madame Jeanine Dujon and requested her to introduce him to this lady. Madame knew the Maharaja and always addressed him as 'Votre Majeste' as the Maharaja was known in Cannes as a King.

Madame Dujon told the Maharaja '*OUI MAJESTE QUEL HONNEUR*'.

After a brief conversation in French, in which I also joined, the Maharaja asked her whether she would condescend to have tea with him next day at 5 p.m. at Hotel Negreco where he was staying. Germaine who knew Madame Dujon intimately looked at her. She nodded her head thereby advising Germaine to accept the invitation of His Majesty.

Germaine arrived punctually at 5 p.m. next day at the Hotel where she was met by the Maharaja himself. There she told us that her name was Germaine Pellegrino and that she had one brother and mother and her fiance was Mr. Reginald Ford, who looked after her education and upbringing and who used to bring to her lots of literary books on various subjects so that her knowledge is increased with a view to be helpful to him as his wife in his vast business enterprises.

After many meetings, Germaine and the Maharaja became good friends and exchanged views on different subjects—cultural, social, political and other matters and the discussions on such lofty subjects gave the Maharaja an idea of her intelligence and scholarly talents.

One evening, sitting on the terrace of the Hotel, the Maharaja asked her whether she would like to visit India. Germaine was overjoyed to hear of the prospect of visiting the country of her dreams and immediately she said to the Maharaja "*Oui Majeste, J' accept l' invitation Si, Regi est d' accord*" (Your majesty I accept the invitation if Regi—Reginald Ford—has no objection). After a few days she came and told the Maharaja that Regi had no objection to her going to India as this visit would give her experience of seeing a highly cultured and ancient country. She however warned the Maharaja not to treat her '*Comme Un Petit Joue*' (like a little toy) to be discarded at will. The Maharaja nodded his head signifying consent. Maharaja and I and other members of the staff left for India

in October and Germaine followed us a couple of weeks later. When she reached Kapurthala by motor car from Jullundur, the Maharaja came to the porch of the main gate of his Palace and received her with great pomp and show along with the royal princes and princesses and the Prime Minister Sir Abdul Hamid and other ministers. The troops lined the routes approaching the main gate and the band under the direction of Mr. Marshall played Marseilles (The National Anthem of France) in honour of his guest who was a French national. After introducing her to the guests in the Louis XIV period drawing-room of the Palace, she was escorted by the Maharaja to the luxurious apartment usually reserved for the favourite Maharanis or Princesses of the royal blood in the west wing of the Palace, overlooking the grand parks on the north and east where from a distance one could see the rare birds from all over the world in an open enclosure. The same night there was a State banquet in honour of Germaine Pellegrino in the Banquet Hall to which were invited distinguished personalities of the capital. Toasts were drunk in Champagne (Bienfrappe). The Maharaja exchanged sweet glances with the Chief Guest of the evening and was looking most jovial and happy.

The Maharaja was struck by her intelligence and quick grasp of things. Germaine was at her height of wits and brilliance when she was discussing high politics in the drawing room with politicians of great eminence. She began to understand the intrigues of the Palace and intricacies of statecraft within one year of her stay in the Palace. She started to take interest in the state politics and the Maharaja consulted her in important state matters. I was then Court Minister and my rank and status was next to the Prime Minister Sir Abdul Hamid with whose policy I did not agree. Germaine usually agreed with my views and both of us moulded the mind of the Maharaja and Abdul Hamid was put on the mat. Virtually I became the Chief Minister of the State and this created jealousy

and heart burning for Abdul Hamid and the third son of the Maharaja, Prince Amarjit Singh who was siding with Abdul Hamid. Thus started their moves to oust me from my office in order to secure the position of Court Minister for the Prince himself.

A few months later, on the recommendation of the Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes, I was selected to represent the Indian States as a delegate to a Second Round Table Conference in 1931 in London and therefore I had to leave Kapurthala for London for the Conference and in my absence Abdul Hamid and Amarjit Singh hatched many plots against me but the intervention of Germaine routed their well-set plots.

At the Second Round Table Conference my speeches were very much appreciated by Mahatma Gandhi and the Prime Minister Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, who sent me a chit marked in his own hand, 'I congratulate you on your speech.' Such chits were usually sent to those whose speeches at the Conference were appreciated by the Prime Minister. The Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes as well as other delegates from the Indian States and British India, particularly Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. M. R. Jayakar, sent telegrams to the Maharaja on my success at the Conference. On my return to Kapurthala the Maharaja gave a banquet in my honour and presented me, as a token of his appreciation, his Royal Railway Saloon which he had purchased at a cost of Rs. 3,00,000, which is still standing near Nizamuddin Railway Station in New Delhi for my personal use. The Maharaja whispered in my ear at the end of the reception that he would appoint me as Chief Minister after consulting the Viceroy of India. Germaine at this banquet was in great joyful mood and dressed herself in gold embroidered saree with thin transparent pink silk blouse decolte and wore exquisite bracelets, earrings in precious diamonds and a row of pearl necklaces which was given to her by the Maharaja from the royal treasury. With a tiara on her head set in rubies and diamonds Germaine rose from one ladder to another

of power and prestige in the State and the Maharaja issued a command that Germaine would be henceforth titled 'Mahan-Salakar' (Chief Adviser) and thus Mademoiselle Germaine Pellegrino became the Chief Advisor of the Court and attended all official functions at the Palace and was received by the Viceroy of India and his Consort, officers of the Political Department of the Government of India and their wives as well as members of the royal families.

The struggle for Chief Ministership continued. The Maharaja left for Europe next spring accompanied by Mlle Pellegrino and members of the staff and myself and we went straight to Paris and stayed at Five Stars Hotel George V near L' Etoile. During her stay in Paris Mademoiselle frequently met Mr. Reginald Ford which created pangs of jealousy in the mind of the Maharaja and he could no longer tolerate her meeting him and told me one morning when he was walking in the Bois de Boulogne in Paris that he would be very happy to marry Germaine and make her his Maharani. Though I knew that she and Reginald Ford loved each other and ultimately she would marry him, I told the Maharaja that he could propose marriage to her. The Maharaja further told me that as she was listening to my advice, I should see that she did not refuse the proposal. The Maharaja was getting more and more infatuated with her beauty, charm, grace and brains. One evening he took her to dinner along with me at the Ritz Hotel and there after a few glasses of champagne, he proposed to her to be his Maharani. Madame was taken aback at this sudden proposition and told him in French very politely, without raising her eyes, 'Comment c'est possible, Monseigneur! Quand Rege est mon fiance'. The Maharaja was grieved to hear this and hurried back to his hotel and had a sleepless night and was in agony. He telephoned me at four in the morning to come and see him. He was furious and down-hearted and told me, foaming with rage that I should persuade her to marry him or he will die. I did not persuade Germaine to marry Jagatjit Singh as

I knew that the marriage with the Maharaja would be a short-lived and an unhappy affair.

After some time Germaine got married to Reginald Ford, to the great grief of the Maharaja who never forgave me for not persuading Germaine, the most beautiful woman of her period to marry him.

The Maharaja came to know of the marriage of Germaine with Reginald Ford only when he sent her in Paris, from Kapurthala, a string of historic pearls of immense value as present for her birthday and when in reply she thanked the Maharaja for the gift which she accepted as a wedding present.



## 45 *Candle Dance in the Pool*

**I**N THE EARLY thirties of this century in Central India the story of forty candles got current. His Highness Maharaja Kishen Singh of Bharatpur, who was known for his luxurious and eccentric habits and who was fond of swimming, got a special pink marble swimming pool, designed for himself and his forty selected consorts. He and the artists had to use all the ingenuity that human being was capable of to put twenty sandalwood steps to get into the swimming pool, so that all the forty nude women could stand there two on each step to receive the Ruler. The Ruler would come exchanging glances with each one of them, pushing some, pulling others and thus by the time he would reach the last step of swimming pool, he would have met his forty women, on the steps of the pool. Each one of them had a specially designed candle with her. As they entered the pool, which was only 2 feet deep, the electric lights were put off. Each woman would then fix the candle conveniently in the middle part of her body, below the navel, and light it reflecting vividly the curves of her waist and private parts. Then a dexterous dance followed, each one taking care that the candle does not touch the water. With the Ruler in the centre they all hopped and played till the splashes of the water put off one candle after another. Merry-making continued until all the candles were extinguished. The woman who kept the last candle burning got the prize and was declared the heroine of the night and received precious gifts and presents from the Ruler besides having the honour of spending the night with her Lord in his bed.

## 46 *Pritam and the Snakes*

**T**HE WAYS OF His Highness Maharaja Ripu Daman Singh of Nabha State were staggeringly crude and dramatic in winning the love of fair maidens for whom he would develop infatuation and sex attraction. Such instances are well-known to the people of the State. Women were tortured in order that they may satisfy the sexual impulses of the Maharaja, but this was known only to the confidential members of his staff who were aware of the cruelties the Maharaja inflicted on innocent young virgin girls whom he wanted for the satisfaction of his lust.

One Pritam Kaur, whom the Maharaja saw in the streets of Nabha when he was going round the town on an official visit, was summoned to the Palace, but she refused to come. The father of the girl who was a high officer in the Government of Nabha was asked to meet the Maharaja and was told to give his daughter in marriage to the Maharaja but he also objected to this alliance.

Pritam was an educated girl and had a degree of Bachelor of Arts from the Punjab University. She was highly cultured and extremely beautiful. Many efforts were made by the Maharaja's courtiers to induce her to see the Maharaja, but Pritam refused to be cajoled into acquiescence. Many messages were sent to her to accept the Maharaja as her husband but in vain.

Months passed by but Pritam would not give in to the evil designs of the Maharaja. To avoid further complications her parents decided to marry her to the son of Shamsher Singh, a nobleman of the town, but the Maharaja intervened and stopped the proposed alliance. The father and mother, seeing the catastrophe, decided to leave the State and to live in some quiet and secluded spot. But before they reached the border of the State, they were arrested by the police and taken

to the prison house and lodged there along with Pritam. After many days of hardship and torture by the police, they were separated from their daughter and were kept in separate cells of the same prison house, not within sight of one another.

The Maharaja disguised himself as a prisoner under the name of Buta and began to meet Pritam and her parents who did not know his real identity. The cell near that of Pritam was allotted to Buta, a co-prisoner, and he began to talk to her and tried to attract her attention by telling her many sweet tales. This created a bond of friendship between Buta, Pritam and her parents, though there was no question of any love affair between Pritam and Buta at that stage. With the help of the Superintendent of Police, Bakhtawar Singh, Buta got hold of a few poisonous snakes but was careful to see that none of them had poisonous fangs and were not dangerous.

At about midnight, these snakes were hurled through the prison bars into the cell where Pritam was sleeping on the floor. In the prison, beds were not supplied to the inmates. As soon as the big reptiles began to crawl over her body, she woke up and saw the snakes on her legs and arms. She began to scream and ask for help but nobody came forward to rescue her from these poisonous snakes. At the psychological moment, Buta entered the cell and began to kill the snakes with his heavy boots and long spear, specially provided to him by the Superintendent of Police. At this particular moment Buta, while holding Pritam tight in his arms, her breast touching his chest, went on killing one snake after the other.

All the prisoners, including the parents of Pritam, gathered outside the cell. While this was happening Pritam went on screaming till she was rescued from these reptiles. She fainted and remained in a state of coma till daybreak. The physician of the prison was called and all the necessary medical aid was given to her in her state of delirium. She was calling Buta who saved her life and she began to show him affection and

admiration for saving her life. The Inspector General of Police, who was also hiding in the prison house in disguise, passed orders that Buta, Pritam and her parents should be released from prison. They went to a remote village outside the State and began to live there.

After a few days, Buta and Pritam were married with the consent of Pritam's parents. After the marriage Buta and Pritam left the village for the home town of Buta. When Buta took her to his palace, then only the identity of Buta was disclosed to Pritam and her parents. After a few months of harmonious married life amidst the splendour and gaiety of the Palace, this innocent and educated woman was discarded and thrown into the old fort like many others and had to spend the rest of her life in misery and utter despair. Pritam's parents died of the shock of this treachery on the part of the Maharaja.

## 47     *Maharaja in Sheep's Clothes*

**T**HE LOVE AFFAIRS of His Highness Maharaja Ripu Daman Singh had the touch of the novel in them. He was crude and gallant, all in one. Whenever a woman would not surrender to his sexual desires, he would arrange a religious festival in the forest where men and women of all classes came of their own accord. For, in such gatherings it was not customary to have an invitation from the Maharaja.

In these festivals tents were put up for the use of those who wanted to stay overnight. The forest was located in a large area and some of these tents were put up in solitary places. The parents of the particular girl who had attracted the attention of the Maharaja were put up in one of the tents in the secluded part of the forest. After so arranging, the story ran thus. Some hired ruffians attacked the tents at night and assaulted the parents. After their hands were tied to a bed, they kidnapped the girl and carried her to a neighbouring village. The girl was crying and weeping and begged them to let her go and to unchain her but her pleadings were in vain. Some men were tearing off her clothes and others were trying to attack her chastity but all this plot was hatched with the backing of the Maharaja. The Maharaja would then appear on the scene in the garb of an ordinary man and would rescue her from the clutches of the ruffians, thus creating a sense of devotion and thankfulness in the heart of the girl for himself. In gratitude the girl would give herself to her valorous champion.

The Maharaja would be very careful while saving her from the clutches of the bandits to pretend that he was merely doing his duty as a passerby. The ruffians were sent to prison and sentenced to several years of imprisonment which sentence was never carried out; on the contrary, they were rewarded with gold and silver.

## 48     *The Royal Astrologer*

**H**IS HIGHNESS GENERAL Maharaja Jagatjit Singh of Kapurthala, had no grandson. He was obsessed with the idea of having a grandson to carry on his name and heritage in the direct line of succession.

His elder son, the Crown Prince, His Highness Paramjit Singh, was married to Princess Brinda of the royal family of Jubbal State in the Himalayas and had three daughters from her. The Raj Jyotshi (Royal Astrologer) Pandit Sri Ram had predicted that the next issue would be a son and so on the night of the birth of the fourth child, the Raj Jyotshi, the Maharani (the mother of the Yuvraj), the Maharaja and the members of the royal family, the Prime Minister, ministers of the Government, officials bearing the rank of Sirdars, representatives of the important public institutions and members of the State Legislature and Religious Heads were invited to the Palace to witness the birth of a son to the Yuvrani.

On this occasion were also present the Governor of the Punjab, British High Officials of the Government of India and the Resident of the Punjab States to represent the Government of India.

As Pandit Sri Ram had predicted that the issue would be a son this time, the Commander-in-Chief of the State Army Bakshi Pooran Singh Bahadur had received orders that a guard of honour and troops should be ready at the royal palace early next morning to give royal salute to the new prince. Electrification of the Palace and the whole town was to be done in multicoloured lamps. Fire-works had arrived from a Calcutta firm to provide the best entertainment on this occasion. At daybreak, 101 guns were to be fired announcing the birth of a son to the Yuvrani. All these preparations were already made and on the final signal of the birth of the Prince celebrations were to begin.

For the celebrations, a budget of Rs. 2 million was sanctioned by Mr. L. French, the Prime Minister, whose services were lent to the State by the Government of India. The Raj Jyotshi had already received help of a million rupees during the pregnancy of the Princess to perform Yag and Havans (religious offerings) to evoke the blessings of the stars but the major portion of that amount went to fill his own coffers concealed in a vault with solid brick and cement structure constructed by his own hands to avoid detection and pillage.

But as destiny would have it, Princess Brinda gave birth again to a girl at 3.30 in the morning on 17th July, 1926 and this news was announced by the Chief Lady Doctor, Miss Pereira who, with tears, rushed to the drawing room where the Maharaja and others were impatiently waiting for the news. Thereupon, the Raj Jyotshi was immediately arrested under the orders of the Maharaja and he was taken in fetters to prison and sentenced to rigorous imprisonment for nine years without any trial.

The Royal Court went into mourning for forty days and the Maharaja and the Maharani shut themselves up in their own rooms, gloomy and sad. The Maharani wailed and wept bitterly for hours on having another grand-daughter.

The guests left the Palace and departed in hurry to their respective places. Over a hundred thousand citizens, men, women and children who had collected outside the Palace gates to join the celebrations returned to their homes dejected and disappointed and were heard saying that the curse of God had descended on this family and that they were pitying the fate of the dynasty.

It is important to mention that in accordance with Hindu Law relating to inheritance in Indian Princely States, daughters do not succeed to the throne of their father.

A few hours later, the Maharani sent a message to me through Colonel Bharpur Singh, her Private Secretary, asking me to meet her immediately. Though I was

tired and weary having been awake the whole night, I went to the Elysees palace of the Maharani and was immediately received in audience by her. She told me in tears rolling down her wrinkled and mournful face, "Dewan Sahib, there is already a curse of God on us as the Maharaja and Yuvraj shaved their beard and long hair and we would be further incurring the displeasure of God if we kept the Raj Jyotshi, a Brahmin of the highest caste, in prison any longer." I approached the Maharaja and conveyed the message of the Maharani and requested him for the release of the Raj Jyotshi from the prison, but the Maharaja refused point blank the request of the Maharani and myself as he was raging with anger at the false predictions of the Raj Jyotshi.

I approached Madame Serry, who was occupying a bedroom adjoining the Maharaja's apartment at the Palace and was the mistress of the Maharaja, to intervene in getting the Raj Jyotshi released from the prison.

Madame Serry agreed to help in this benevolent cause. She went to see the Maharaja who, at that time, was having his bath in his spacious pink marble bathroom which was smelling of refreshing famous French perfumes. Vapours from bath salts emanated like clouds. Madame Serry entered the big bath room to bathe with her beloved Maharaja and in most loving words after playing with him in water and sprinkling rose petals on him asked him not to be cruel and let the Raj Jyotshi off. The Inspector General of Police, Sirdar Suchet Singh, was thereupon ordered by the Maharaja to release the prisoner but all his property was confiscated and he was banished from the State. All the member of his family who were occupying high posts in the Government were dismissed.

A few days later, a most confidential and trusted chief attendant of the Maharaja by the name of Sirdar Partap Singh dreamt that Guru Govind Singh Ji Kaligidhar, the tenth Guru of the Sikhs, riding his favourite white horse, told him that if the Maharaja would take



a vow that his grandson would grow beard and long hair and would be properly brought up in the tenets of the Sikh religion, then the Guru would give him a grandson.

Sirdar Partap Singh ran immediately to the Palace on foot with full speed to cover a distance of two miles and woke up the Maharaja without observing any of the formalities necessary to enter his bedroom at that time of the night and told him in trembling excited tones of his dream. When the Maharaja heard of this dream he told Partap Singh that the orders of the Guru would be carried out. Immediately, he personally telephoned to Mr. L. French, Prime Minister, for an emergency meeting of the Cabinet and apprised the ministers of this dream. He asked the Prime Minister to arrange a public meeting at the Gurdwara (temple) next morning, inviting a number of citizens, ministers, officials and the members of his own family, where he would take the vow before the sacred book, Granth Sahib, that he would baptize his grandson into Sikhism and would make him grow beard and long hair.

The Prime Minister and other ministers of the Court were specially connected by telephone by an automatic telephone exchange by which even the Cabinet meeting could take place without the ministers appearing in person.

The Maharaja drove from his Palace to the Gurdwara in his gold coach, driven by six horses, accompanied by his heir-apparent Paramjit Singh. The carriage was escorted by the Palace bodyguards in blue uniforms with swords in their hands. On arrival at the Gurdwara, the Maharaja and Yuvraj were met by Bhai Harnam Singh, the High Priest of the Gurdwara, who took them to the main hall where the Sacred Book was placed. The Maharaja bowed before the Sacred Book and touched it with his forehead. In front of a big gathering of Hindus, Sikhs, Christians and Muslims, he took the pledge before the Sacred Book. The High Priest, Granthi Bhai Harnam Singh spoke loudly in melodious voice before the Sacred Book

which has assumed the role and position of the 11th Guru after the death of Guru Govind Singh Ji Maharaj.

“Great Guru, Jagatjit Singh Maharaja of Kapurthala has come before your Supremeness with all his family, ministers and officials of the State to offer you profound respect. Oh, true Emperor, Jagatjit Singh has come to seek your blessing in all humility for the birth of a grandson whom he promises to baptise into Sikhism. His and Yuvraj's sins may be forgiven for not growing long hair and beard. True Great Lord, Jagatjit Singh, has come with an offering of 11 thousand rupees and 101 plates of sacred Halva (Karah Parshad) to be placed at thy sacred feet.”

While the Maharaja was kneeling before the Sacred Book, slogans of ‘Satsriakal’, God is great, were shouted and hymns sung by the gathering at the top of their voice.

## 49 *Selecting a Bride*

**B**RINDA, THE FIRST Yuvrani, had already lost favour of her husband, Yuvraj Paramjit Singh of Kapurthala. He was already entangled in a serious love affair with a beautiful blonde Miss Stella Mudge, an English woman he had met in London in a restaurant while she was playing piano in a Cabaret show. He fell in love with her at first sight and remained standing by her side throughout the night while she was playing the piano. Brinda had started travelling abroad. The Yuvraj was absent from India for several months in a year as he was travelling in America and Europe with Miss Stella Mudge. Conjugal relationship between the Yuvraj and Yuvrani had ceased after the birth of the third daughter and therefore the prospect of a further offspring from Brinda was ruled out.

Lord Curzon, Viceroy of India, was a staunch Imperialist and wanted to rule India with sword rather than with pen and did not like the idea of Indian princes marrying English or American women, as such alliances in his opinion created in the mind of the people of India an inferiority complex about the women of the ruling classes. He forbade some Indian princes, whom he knew to be sexual maniacs, to enter Simla during the season, lest they set amorous eyes on European women. This he did after Lady Curzon was photographed by Maharaja Bhupinder Singh of Patiala after he dressed her in a gorgeous sari and bedecked her with all the precious jewels of his Treasure.

It was also in the time of Lord Curzon that orders were issued to the effect that no Indian Prince should leave India without the permission of the Viceroy. Jagatjit Singh, Maharaja of Kapurthala, who was refused permission to go to Europe by Lord Curzon sought an interview with the Viceroy which was granted. At this interview he said to Lord Curzon,

"Your Excellency, the administration of my State is efficient and in my absence it will remain as efficient as now." Lord Curzon got angry and said, "Then what is the use of your Highness remaining the Ruler of the State when the administration of the State can go on efficiently without you." On hearing this the Maharaja was dumbfounded and did not repeat this request.

Miss Stella Mudge would not allow Paramjit to get married again and he refused to listen to the advice of his father and courtiers for a second marriage. Ultimately under constant pressure by the Maharani and her offer of valuable gifts to the Yuvraj, the Yuvraj got married second time. For inducing the Yuvraj to get married a second time the Prime Minister Mr. Louis French, an Englishman from the Political Department of India, carefully hatched a plot to allure the Yuvraj to accept this proposal.

There was also another serious hitch as Lord Curzon, Viceroy of India, had enacted a law by which no issue of an Indian ruler from an English or foreign wife was to succeed to the throne of an Indian State. By this law, a son by Miss Stella Mudge, if she had one, could not claim succession in his line. Therefore, her marriage with Yuvraj was ruled out as far as the law of inheritance was concerned.

A Cabinet meeting was held to discuss this tangle. The Maharaja presided and it was decided at that meeting that Dewan Suresher Dass, Chief Justice of the High Court, Sirdar Bharpur Singh, Private Secretary to the Senior Maharani Harbans Kaur, Lady Doctor Miss Pereira and palace physician Dr. Sohan Lal and myself should form a committee called Marriage Committee to select a bride for the Yuvraj. The Viceroy was approached through the Political Department for his help. Both the Viceroy and the British Resident were interested in the Maharaja having a grandson.

As a matter of fact, the British Viceroy and the Resident had instructions from the King Emperor to agree within certain limits to the whims and idiosyn-

crasies of the Maharaja.

Official letters were sent by the Governor of the Punjab to the Deputy Commissioner of Kangra District to help the Committee in the fulfilment of their mission. The Deputy Commissioner who was a member of the ICS by the name of Mr. Prem Thaper was puzzled in performing such a delicate duty and approached the Chief Justice and members of the Committee for instructions and guidance.

In his heart of hearts he liked this special duty though he was publicly heard saying that he would not be able to be present at the meetings more than once or twice a week. He circulated orders to the Tehsildars and junior officials of the district to persuade the parents of the noble Rajput families to agree to allow their daughters to appear before the Marriage Committee for selection of a bride for the Yuvraj. This was also proclaimed by beat of drums and by means of distribution of pamphlets in the villages for the information of all concerned.

A huge camp was put up at Dharamsala and the Deputy Commissioner gave all facilities to the members of the Committee and was often present at the camp to supervise the arrangements. Several commodious tents were put up for accommodating the members of the Committee to carry on their work. The Deputy Commissioner had also placed at the disposal of the Committee several clerks and peons. The Committee was also helped by four efficient lady doctors and two civil surgeons. The Mission consisted of about 100 persons including the military guards, assistants, cooks, waiters and camp-followers. By the beat of the drum the district was informed of the orders of the Deputy Commissioner and girls of marriageable age were brought to the camp to be interviewed by the Selection Committee. About 250 girls were interviewed by the Selection Committee. The terms of reference for the selection were laid down by the Committee and circulated in the district in Hindi and Urdu languages by the officers. These read:

1. The would-be bride should be of medium height, slim with streamlining body.
2. A girl having real blood brothers is more likely to give birth to a boy than a girl who has no brothers.
3. Pedigree of the family to be examined at least for the last 10 generations.
4. She should be free from venereal diseases and healthy in all respects.
5. She should not be more than 17.
6. She should have no objection to all necessary tests by the lady doctors attached to the Committee.
7. If a girl is selected, she will be married to the Yuvraj Paramjit of Kapurthala and will be the mother of the future ruler of the State.
8. Parents will be well rewarded.

In pursuance of the above notification, the girls were called one by one to the Committee Room. First, they were orally examined by the members of the Marriage Committee presided over by the Chief Justice of the High Court. General questions were asked and then they were passed on to the Private Secretary to the Maharani Sirdar Bharpoor Singh who was allotted a separate tent. The third tent was used by the lady doctors headed by Miss Pereira. The lady doctors used the latest modern instruments for tests and their tent looked like a veritable operation theatre in a hospital. In the fourth tent the Palace Physician Dr. Sohan Lal sat and took notes about the general condition of the girls. Several shamianas were put up as waiting rooms and as toilet rooms for use of the candidates. The colony of the tents grew up like a town.

The lady doctors tested the condition of the fallupian tubes whether they were healthy and perfect to produce a child. The Uterus was also examined to find out whether it was defective in any way. The Pathologists carried out pathological examination of the sputum, blood, urine, faeces etc. Sirdar Bharpoor Singh, Private Secretary, was to measure the height and width

of the girls from head to feet. Being a man of acute sexual temperament and hypermaniac he went beyond the scope of his duty as he was not only making a general test as prescribed by the rules laid down for the selection of girls but he took advantage of the opportunity of feeling the breasts of the girls in order to satisfy his own amorous desire. This gave rise to complaints about the conduct of Sirdar Bharpoor Singh which reached the Marriage Committee.

He was summoned to the main Committee Room and interrogated by them. He said in defence that he had received instructions from the Maharani to carry out the tests in that manner and as such the Committee had no authority to question his discretion. The Committee also visited six other districts in the neighbourhood and continued their labours for months, and finally four girls were selected who were taken by special cars to the Capital for presentation to the Maharaja.

The girls belonged to the respectable Rajput families who derived their ancestry from the rulers of Northern India and at the time of Muslim invasion had taken shelter in the hills for fear of Muslim savagery. These families had now been reduced to poverty on account of lack of means of livelihood, but all the time they were proudly conscious of their family traditions. They would not marry their girls to any one who was not of their clan and history has recorded tales of many sacrifices for protecting the honour of their women.

When these four beautiful girls, well built and slim, were taken to Kapurthala by motor cars and were presented to the Maharaja for the final selection, he eventually selected one girl out of the four to be the future Yuvrani and she was sent to the Palace of the Senior Maharani, the mother of the Yuvraj.

Preparations started for the marriage of the Yuvraj on a grand scale and invitations were issued to the Viceroy, High British officials of the Government of India, the Maharajas of the neighbouring States, members of several royal families in India, wealthy com-

mercial and industrial magnates and public men both from the Indian States and British India. A budget of three million rupees was set aside for the celebrations of this marriage for which the date was fixed.

Four days before the marriage was to take place, Miss Mudge who had by then got the Yuvraj in her firm grips and on whom the Yuvraj showered all his love and wealth threatened the Yuvraj to leave him if he were to marry again. On hearing this the Yuvraj fainted at the feet of Miss Mudge. Dr. Sohan Lal was called to treat him. The doctor gave smelling salts but the Yuvraj remained in a coma. While the Yuvraj was undergoing this agony, Miss Mudge was packing up her clothes to leave the Palace. The wise doctor said to the Maharaja that His Highness the Yuvraj had a shock and that he would not recover until Miss Mudge shouted to him repeatedly for half an hour that the Maharaja had given up the idea of the second marriage. The Maharaja agreed to this suggestion of Doctor Sohan Lal to save the life of the Yuvraj.

It became a big problem for the Government of the State, as most of the invitations were issued and arrangements for the celebrations for the marriage had been already made at huge expense. At a Cabinet meeting presided over by the Maharaja, it was submitted to the Maharaja that Miss Stella Mudge should be bribed with money and valuable jewels in order that she might allow the Yuvraj to marry a second time. A trusted Swiss maidservant of Miss Mudge was entrusted to give this message to her mistress confidentially and persuade her to allow the Yuvraj to marry.

The maidservant was able to persuade her mistress and Miss Mudge demanded Rs. 10 lakhs as compensation for allowing the Yuvraj a second matrimonial alliance. Her second condition was that she would only allow the Yuvraj to visit his wife for one hour between 7 and 8 p. m. once in a month till the Yuvrani was pregnant. After this settlement, Miss Mudge approached the Yuvraj and loudly said "My Doggie darling—mon petit chou, mon bien aime—I love you.



The Maharaja has given up the idea of marriage." Slowly the Yuvraj regained consciousness.

After a few days Miss Mudge began to persuade the Yuvraj to undergo the religious ceremonies connected with the marriage and the marriage took place with great eclat. Thousands of guests came to Kapurthala to participate in the rejoicings and they were entertained most lavishly in the beautiful palace of the Maharaja. Banquets were held and the Viceroy, the Governors of the neighbouring provinces, political Agents, Maharajas of the important States with the members of the royal families, their ministers were all present. The citizens were entertained in the Indian style while the banquets were held in the European style.

The Viceroy blessed the bride and the bridegroom and wished them the birth of a son. Guests from France, Italy, Spain and other parts of Europe and America were participating in the festivals lasting two weeks, though the Viceroy had left after two days' stay. There were great rejoicings throughout the length and breadth of the State. The poor were fed and the prisoners were let off. Miss Mudge, according to tradition, was not to be invited to participate in the ceremonies. She left for Dehra Dun and spent two weeks with an Indian friend Padam Bahadur who was secretly having a love affair with her.

The Senior Maharani was living in a separate palace called Elysees Palace at a distance of one mile from the Maharaja's Palace and she placed luxurious apartment at the Yuvrani's disposal where the Yuvraj was to meet her. At that time the Yuvraj was living with Miss Stella Mudge in a separate small cottage near the Palace of his father, while his first wife Brinda lived in a Palace on the riverside called Buenovista, four miles away from the Capital.

The Yuvraj was so overwhelmingly in love with Miss Mudge that he would not care to go and visit his new wife. Months passed by and the Yuvraj did not see his wife in spite of the fact that Miss Mudge had allowed him to visit her once in a month between 7 and 8 p.m.

The Maharani and other friends of the Yuvraj persuaded the Yuvraj to meet the Yuvrani. On the persuasion of the Maharani and by the permission of Miss Mudge, the Yuvraj agreed at last to visit his wife to consummate his marriage for which a day was fixed well in advance. At the appointed time and date, preparations were made by the Maharani for the reception of the Yuvraj at her own Palace. The Yuvrani at the appointed time bathed in scented water and dressed in a gorgeous gold and silver sari. She wore the precious State pearl necklaces, diamond rings and crown studded with sapphires and big historical diamonds of rare value on her head. Her nails of hand and feet were manicured by the maidservants. Special ointments were rubbed all over her exquisite body. The palms of her feet and hands were anointed with vermin. Forty maidservants and companions under the supervision of the Maharani were engaged on his toilet throughout the day and by seven o'clock the Yuvrani was ready to receive her beloved husband for the great event.

The Yuvrani looked exquisite and attractive in that regalia and angels vied with each other to be in the position of the Yuvraj. On the other hand, the Yuvraj's plight was inexplicable. He left his Palace to meet his bride after a serious quarrel with Miss Mudge. His valet Dev Raj carried his suitcase with a pair of silk pyjamas and dressing gown. Miss Mudge, though she allowed him to visit his wife, again reminded him at the time of his departure that he should be back before 8 p.m. The Yuvraj reached the Elysees Palace at 7 p.m. and was taken immediately into the room where the Yuvrani was waiting impatiently for her husband. The Maharani, ministers and near relatives were present on this occasion in the drawing room and were watching the arrival and departure of the Yuvraj. The priests were singing hymns to evoke the blessings of the Stars. The Yuvraj did not utter a word to any of them on his arrival and looking ahead absent-mindedly went straight to the room occupied by his wife and came out at 7.55 p.m. rather tired and

pensive. After saying good-bye to his mother, he proceeded to his house where Miss Mudge was waiting for him. After paying this visit to the Yuvrani, the Yuvraj and Miss Mudge left for Europe and started on their usual activities in night clubs, theatres and other places of amusement.

A couple of months afterwards, it was announced that the Yuvrani was expecting a child and in due course a son was born to the Yuvrani. This was marked by great celebrations similar to those which took place at the time of the wedding. 101 guns were fired in celebration of the birth of the grandson to the Maharaja. The Viceroy was informed of the happy event and he recognised the boy as the direct descendant of Maharaja Jagatjit Singh.

The Maharaja in order to fulfil his pledge to Gurm Gobind Singh held a prayer meeting before the sacred Granth at the Gurdwara and more than ten thousand guests were invited to it. At this meeting before the Sacred Book (Granth Sahib) he again took the pledge that he would baptize his grandson into Sikhism and that he would wear beard and grow long hair. As a matter of fact, the young prince was taken to the Gurdwara in the lap of the Maharaja and when the pledge was taken the Maharaja held his grandson in his arms and he made bow before the Sacred Book.

The young prince who was named as Sukhit Singh after the sacred Palace ceremony, succeeded his father as Maharaja of Kapurthala, since his birth observed willingly the symbols of Sikh religion, the five Ks. These are: Kesh, Kara, Katcha, Kanga and Kirpan. (i) The Kesh is the long hair worn by a Sikh representing his creed; (2) Kara is the iron bangle worn on the hand; (3) Katcha is the short worn inside the trousers; (4) Kanga is the comb which has to be worn in the hair and (5) Kirpan is the sword, which proclaims the dedication of the Sikhs to their religion. To be a true Sikh the disciple must take "paul" initiation and wear the five Ks.

In the meantime, the angelic Yuvrani, a young

woman of remarkable beauty and grace, hardly 21 years of age, began to pine and fret for her husband who was always in Europe with Miss Mudge, squandering money in merry-making and buying precious presents for her and visiting night clubs. She eventually became a victim of tuberculosis and died after two years of agony and suffering. She breathed her last after fulfilling the mission of her life by giving birth to a cultured and capable heir to the throne.

She was cremated in the Palace Gardens after a simple ceremony and no monument was erected to perpetuate her memory.

## 50 *From the Sands of Alwar*

**S**EWAI MAHARAJ SHRI Sewai Jey Singh, Ruler of Alwar, got annoyed with his pony while playing polo at Mount Abu in Rajasthan, and beat it mercilessly in the presence of the Agent to the Governor General, Sir Robert Holland, other Political Officers, and a huge crowd of visitors and the public. He ordered that the pony should be given no food or water for two days.

On another occasion, he invited the famous Astrologer, Alastor, from Bombay who demanded one thousand rupees a day for the period of his stay out of Bombay, exclusive of all other expenses such as travelling, food, etc., for himself and his companions. As the reputation of Alastor had spread throughout India and his predictions were reputed to be correct, the Maharaja wanted to consult him with regard to his chances for election as Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes. He agreed to pay the sum demanded as his fee and also accepted other terms.

The astrologer arrived at Alwar, the capital of the State, but he was met by no one at the railway station though he had informed the Private Secretary to the Maharaja of the time of his arrival by wire. The astrologer who was a wealthy man and owned motor cars and houses in Bombay and elsewhere was obliged to walk half the way on foot from the station, before he managed to hire a one-horse carriage with a dirty and torn harness and a lousy old horse. He reached the guest house but found to his surprise that no arrangement had been made for his stay. He wandered from place to place but nobody would have him for the night.

The Finance Minister of the Government, Mr. R. C. Khanna, met him by chance while he was walking through the main street and he asked Alastor who he was and where he was going. Mr. Khanna did not

know Alastor personally but finding a well-dressed man with strange and distressed look wanted to inquire about his whereabouts. Alastor told him the whole story and showed the telegram sent to him by the Maharaja inviting him to the State as his guest. As this officer knew the eccentric nature of the Maharaja and was also afraid to telephone or send a message to the A.D.C. or the Private Secretary to the Maharaja at that time, he took the astrologer to his own house and gave him food and shelter.

The next day when the astrologer contacted the Private Secretary, no notice was taken of him and he was told that he should remain where he was and that when the Maharaja demanded his presence he would be informed of it. The official who was the host of the astrologer was in a very awkward position. He did not mind entertaining the astrologer, but was anxious to know the reaction of the Maharaja towards the astrologer. If the Maharaja was hostile to the astrologer, then his own position would be jeopardised and he might incur the displeasure of the Maharaja and get dismissed from service. Being himself humane and God-fearing, he did not want to put a stranger out in the street.

Every day the astrologer went to the Palace and to the house of the Private Secretary. He even went to the houses of the clerks, peons and the hierarchy of attendants of the Palace, and pleaded that they conveyed his message to the 'Maharaj' that he either should have an opportunity to see the Maharaja or be permitted to go back to Bombay. Secret Police officers kept a vigilant watch on the movements of the astrologer.

One day the astrologer managed to escape but when he reached the railway station to catch the train, he was prevented from doing so by the Superintendent of Police. He was asked to return, not to the house of Mr. Khanna, but to be put behind bars. The astrologer was greatly perplexed and worried. He fretted and began to lose weight as he thought he would never be able to get out of captivity. He sent

telegrams to his own people intimating them the miserable plight he was in but none of his relatives was allowed to enter the State. The poor astrologer had to pass his days in a prison cell.

Three or four months passed and the bill of the astrologer had run up to more than a hundred thousand rupees. His railway expenses were also not paid. One morning the Inspector General of Police, Rai Bahadur Gopal Dass, came and informed the astrologer that the Maharaja had expressed a desire to see him. The astrologer dressed himself in his gala clothes, and was happy that the bad days had ended. He was conducted to the drawing room of the Vijaya Mandir — the Palace of Victory — after having sat for a few minutes in the A.D.C.'s room. The Maharaja was sitting on a plush covered golden chair surrounded by his courtiers. He always used furniture without leather which he hated to touch, regarding it as impure. The astrologer bowed before the Maharaja and he was given a seat of honour. After an hour's silence, the astrologer said — 'Your Highness, I am ready to predict the future of Your Highness, but I did not know that I would undergo such hardship in your State.' The Maharaja replied, "I do not like to consult you as you yourself did not know the fate that was waiting you on arrival. What can you predict of my future!" The astrologer was then curtly asked to leave without being paid his fees or the Railway fares. He, however, thanked his stars to be a free man again and returned to Bombay without his head being chopped off.

## 51 *Gloves and the Emperor*

**H.** H. THE Maharaja of Alwar attended the Round Table Conference in England and he was invited by King George and Queen Mary to Buckingham Palace for a reception. He sent a letter to the Lord Chamberlain that he would not shake hands without the gloves, as he was an orthodox Hindu and a direct descendent of Sri Ram Chandra—the personification of God—and so he could not touch the hands of infidels. He would not shake hands with anybody without his gloves, save Hindus.

Hearing this, the Queen was enraged and sent orders to the Lord Chamberlain that on no account the King and the Queen would shake hands with him with his gloves on. The King was so annoyed that he thought of removing his name from the list of invitees. The Secretary of State threatened to send back the Maharaja to India if he behaved in that discourteous manner. The Maharaja himself was afraid of the consequences and so contrived a method by which he could save his honour and at the same time not annoy the King and Queen. He went to the best tailor in London and asked him how gloves could be manufactured in a way that they could be put on or taken off very quickly. With the help of an expert, a pair of mechanically operated gloves were devised. The Maharaja was quite satisfied with the pair of gloves. He went to the Palace and told Lord Chamberlain that he would shake hands with the Sovereign and his consort without the gloves on. About 500 guests were present on this occasion. The Maharaja came with his gloves on and was seen by all the guests. But when he was a few feet away from Their Majesties and was about to shake hands, the gloves were removed from his hands by the mechanical device which was operated by a switch. The royal hand-shake over, it took only a second for



the gloves to be on his hands again.

The guests were taken in and thought that the Maharaja had shaken hands with his gloves on and had not broken his old tradition. However, the King and the Queen seemed pleased. On this occasion, the Maharaja wore a long tight tunic of beige satin with a turban of dark green velvet and a flashing ornament of diamonds above the head. The gloves were light in colour, matching the colour scheme of his dress and the complexion of his hands.

## 52 *For Europeans Only*

**A**MONG HIS OTHER oddities the Maharaja of Alwar had the habit of belittling his own Ministers and officials in the presence of British, American and foreign guests. Once at a banquet table he ordered that only his European and American guests should be entertained with champagne and wines, but his own Indian guests and officers would only have water. I was also present at this banquet as a special invitee. The Maharaja did not let the waiters serve champagne or other wines to me, but the Duchess of Sutherland offered her own glass to me. The same thing happened with other wines as with champagne which were passed on to me each time by the Duchess. This caused utter disgust and humiliation to the Maharaja. He was ignorant of the fact that the Duke and the Duchess were my personal friends from London.

A man of strong likes and dislikes, the Maharaja of Alwar's idiosyncrasies were unbounded. He developed great aversion to touching leather and an intense hatred for dogs. This reached a climax and it came to the notice of the Political Department when the Maharaja had accepted an invitation from Lord Willingdon, the Viceroy of India, to come and stay with him at the Viceregal Lodge, Simla. Such invitations were keenly sought after by the ruling princes. But the Maharaja made no concessions in compromising with his whims and fancy. He asked his Military Secretary to write to his counterpart at the Viceregal Lodge, pointing out the dislikes of the Maharaja for dogs and the touching of leather in any shape or form. This created a flutter in the Viceregal Lodge, and was frowned upon by the Viceroy. However, instructions were given to the staff to change the entire upholstery of the furniture in the especially allotted suites of rooms in the Viceregal Palace, and that the dogs be kept tied during the visit

of the Maharaja. This request of the Maharaja was not liked by Lady Willingdon who was particularly fond of her Pekinese dog. The Maharaja arrived at the Viceregal Lodge accompanied by the members of his staff and seemed to be much satisfied with the arrangements made for his comfort, though they were made much to the dislike of Their Excellencies, the Viceroy and the Countess of Willingdon.

The Maharaja attended a banquet held in his honour at the Viceregal Lodge at which a large number of people took part. While the Viceregal staff were busy in looking after the arrangements of the banquet the Pekinese dog got restless at being kept in loneliness away from his mistress, and somehow sneaked away from the kennel and getting underneath the table rolled into the feet of Lady Willingdon. The Maharaja being principal guest was sitting on the right hand of Her Excellency and the dog in a frolicking mood strayed into the legs and feet of the Maharaja. Jumping, as if he had an electric shock, the Maharaja found the Pekinese dog underneath his feet still licking them with great gusto. His temper rose in fury at the laxity of arrangements at not keeping the dogs tied during his stay at the Lodge as per his instructions, and he at once left the table in the middle of the banquet without saying a word to the Vicereine or anybody else. The Maharaja hurried to his suite of rooms and reaching there cast away all his apparel and had a plunge in the tub of his bathroom for purification of the foul touch of the dog.

The guests assembled at the banquet table were aghast at such a show of discourtesy and height of disrespect towards the representatives of the King Emperor of India. Meanwhile, the Maharaja had changed his clothes and adorned himself in another costly outfit, and walked back into the hall. All eyes were turned to the Maharaja and feelings of the Viceroy and the Vicereine could be better imagined than described. The Maharaja without apologising for his actions-explained the reason of his sudden withdrawal from the

table. The Viceroy being a seasoned diplomat concealed his annoyance at the uncalled for conduct of the Maharaja, but the incident was nevertheless recorded as a black mark against him in the files of the Political Department. The Viceroy subsequently reported the incident in his monthly review of events in India, to the King through the Secretary of State for India.

After many years of despotic reign, he was asked by the British Government to remain away from the State for 3 years in the first instance or till such time as peace and order was restored in the State. The Government took this step under the pretext of bad finances and maladministration for which the Maharaja was charged. The State's finances were so depleted that it called for the deposition of the Maharaja. Shortly afterwards he went to Europe with a staff of about 40 men and women after getting a loan from Seth Govind Ram Saksaria of Bombay known as the Cotton King, after mortgaging part of his best jewellery.

The end came rather tragically. Not seeing any hope of being able to regain his throne he started indulging in strong drinks from morning till he went to bed. This broke his health. While staying in Paris at a luxury hotel, he arranged to go and play Racquets at a club in Bois-de-Bolougne. Coming down the steps after the game, he slipped and fell — thus breaking his hip and collar bone. He died after four days of much suffering and agony.

## 53 *Begum Khan and the Alwar Orgies*

**W**ITH MOST UNUSUAL titles of Bharat Dharam Prabhakar, the Resplendence of the Faith of India, Raj Rishi, and the Holy Sage of the Domain, Maharaja His Highness and His Holiness rolled into one Shri Maharaja Jey Singh Ji of Alwar State belonged to the purest and highest of clans.

The Maharaja of Alwar was one out of the boys educated at the Ajmer College of Princes and Chiefs. He became a ruler but had no sympathy for the aspirations of the people nor had he any knowledge or experience of the real feelings or difficulties of the people of the State. He remained at the distant height of a Highness.

He began to indulge in luxury as other Princes did and began to build huge palaces on which he spent millions of rupees and roads which led to his private palaces, the construction of which also cost very heavily. These roads were not constructed for the use of the public but only for the use of the Maharaja and his guests. Some of these roads constructed by the Maharaja of Alwar were spread over nearly 100 miles leading to palaces in thick forests where the Maharaja used to shoot tigers, leopards and other big game.

The Palace of Siriska was built about 20 miles from the capital for shooting tigers and big game. One of the roads which led to the Palace did not go further than this Palace. It was for the exclusive use of the Maharaja and his guests. Both the Palace and the roads cost the State exchequer more than 10 million rupees. The beauty of the Palace was that the Maharaja and his guests could shoot the tigers and leopards from the balcony of the Palace. This palace was surrounded by vast and thick forests and tigers were roaming round at large in these forests.

Even when motoring on his long road, tigers and

other ferocious animals were often seen on both sides of the road and the Maharaja and his guests indulged in shooting them. The roads were metalled and as good and broad as the road from Naples to Rome, built by the orders of the dictator Mussolini.

As a matter of fact, from the budget of the State it was clear that most of the expenditure from the Public Works Department was for the construction of these roads by the Maharaja, for his personal use. Roads leading to villages and other cities connecting the capital were utterly neglected and were in bad condition.

Similar was the case with other items of expenditure of the Utility Department of his State. The Maharaja had a large entourage and staff. He considered himself to be the direct descendant of the Sun. He got the genealogical tree of Alwar family prepared which proved that he was the direct descendant of the Surya, the Sun. The genealogical tree was meant to prove that his Divine ancestor was Rama who is considered to be the personification of God by the Hindus. He was obsessed with the idea that he was himself an Avtar, personification of God.

He also adopted the dress worn by Sri Ram Chander several thousand years ago. He had a mukat, the head-dress, similar to the one used in those days by Sri Ram Chander. It was just like the Crown of England without the crucifix and looked more like the Persian hat studded with precious stones.

The Maharaja was averse to women and as a matter of fact he never had any sexual desire or relationship with a woman throughout his life. He, on the contrary, liked the company of men though he had many Maharanis and was married four times.

He chose his ministers and his officials, Private Secretaries and ADCs with great care but before their selection he was very careful to see whether the physical side of the officer appealed to him.

He had renowned ministers and officials in his State including Ghazanfar Ali Khan who was a descendant of the great Mughals and later was High Commissioner

for Pakistan in India. He was appointed as Revenue Minister by the Maharaja who had full confidence in him and gave him free access to his Palace and the harem.

The Maharaja, though a woman-hater, had orgies at night which the Maharanis and concubines also attended and some of his favourite ministers and staff officers were also admitted. In these functions there were no distinctions between the Maharanis and the concubines. And the men who were invited to these parties had the unchecked privilege of becoming intimate with any of the women there, if an opportunity arose.

The Maharaja was always present at these orgies and he did not object to his officials taking full liberties with the Maharanis and other women of the Palace, so much so that during the drunken bouts and sexual exuberations lasting the whole night, women were taken away by the officials to secluded places where they could be alone with them.

Ghazanfar Ali Khan had in his arms all the women of the harem at one time or the other and this was known to most of the officials that the Khan was permitted to have a free and intimate relationship with the women of the Palace and the wives and daughters of the ministers and officials of the State.

The Maharaja being a man of jealous temperament used to invite the wives and daughters of the ministers and officials. The object of this was to save the honour and reputation of the women in the Palace so that everybody was in the same boat. The wives and daughters of the ministers and the officials also met the same fate as that of the Maharanis and the Ranis.

The Khan being a true Musalman had the approval of the Maharaja that his wife and other female members of his family need not participate in these functions as it was forbidden by the Holy Koran that they should show their face and body to anyone excepting their husbands and near relatives.

Several years passed and Khan became more and more popular with the women of the Palace and the

Maharaja. The Hindu officials led by Chaudhari Girdhari Lall, Prime Minister, convened a meeting at a secret place at the Red Fort and discussed the matter with regard to Khan's entry into the Palace while his wife and other women of his household remained shut up in his house or stayed outside the State. Chaudhari Girdhari Lall convinced the Hindu officials that a slur on their character, honour and reputation was brought about by the fact that Khan should be so free with their women folk while he himself did not allow his women to be free with them. They were afraid to approach the Maharaja on this subject.

One day when they found the Maharaja in an extra jovial mood and Khan was away from the State on some official mission, the Chaudhari talked on behalf of the Hindu officials to the Maharaja on this serious and delicate matter. He said, "Your Highness, we have no objection to our women coming to your Palace and be treated in the way you and your ADCs treat them or our own brother officers mix with them but we do resent the Khan having such a relationship with our women, while he himself keeps his women away from the palace".

The Maharaja listened to this talk patiently. At first he was annoyed but his anger began to subside and ultimately he was convinced that the Chaudhari was perfectly right in saying what he said. When the Khan came back from his official tour and had an audience with the Maharaja, the Maharaja told him that next time when there was a festival at the Palace, he should also bring his wife. Khan was much perplexed to hear this and wanted to make some excuses, but knowing the temperament of the Maharaja that he would send him to prison if he went against the wishes of the Maharaja, told him that he would certainly bring his Begum to the Palace at the next festival of Diwali which was coming after a month. Khan requested the Maharaja to give him a month to bring his Begum from Lahore to attend Diwali festival. The Maharaja immediately offered ten thousand rupees to



him to go and bring his Begum to the capital from Lahore.

Khan left the capital and on his way he stopped at Delhi and consulted some of his friends including Mr. J. N. Sahni. He talked to them of his miserable plight. He told them that he would never be able to persuade his Begum to participate in night festivals and that if he did not take his Begum to the capital, the Maharaja would certainly get him arrested and put him in prison. His friends told him that the matter was very simple and that he, being a Mussalman, had the legal right to have a temporary marriage called "Mutta" with some woman and that such a marriage would be considered a legal one in accordance with Islamic laws and that he should choose a beautiful dancing girl in the town for this purpose.

They further advised him to get hold of a Mullah to perform the ceremony of Mutta with this girl. Khan who was sad and dejected became cheerful and said to his friends that his life was saved. He went all round the city to see the dancing girls and the prostitutes along with some of his friends and selected one intelligent woman who was well-built and had a handsome and pretty face and asked her parents whether they would agree to his marrying this girl on a temporary basis. The dancing girls and prostitutes have no scruples of any kind to get married and go around with a man as his wife. They welcomed the idea of marriage with a distinguished man whether it was temporary or permanent. The parents of the woman were explained the purpose of this marriage that the girl would have to play up a game of skill and talent in accordance with the instructions and wishes of Khan. The terms were settled. Half of the amount of settlement was paid in advance and the remaining half was to be paid after her mission was over.

Khan put the selected bride in a private house in New Delhi and for a week or ten days she was trained fully to play her role. While Khan was away to Lahore to see his Begum, his friends further gave the tempor-

ary wife of Khan more lessons in practical sex psychology in which she was not lacking already.

Khan sent a telegram from Lahore to the Maharaja saying that he was coming with his Begum and that he would be reaching that very Saturday by the evening train. Seeing the telegram, the Maharaja told his courtiers, "Didn't I tell you that my faithful Minister will turn up and that he will not go against my commands." The Maharaja sent a telegram in reply stating that a State reception would be given to him and his Begum on their arrival at the appointed time and date.

Khan passed through Delhi and took his Begum from the house of his friend and reserved two first class compartments and one second class compartment in the train in which he and his Begum and his staff members travelled. The Maharaja met Khan and his Begum, who was veiled from top to bottom in a silk purple-coloured burqa, at the railway station along with all the ministers, officials and courtiers and a Guard of Honour was presented to Khan.

The Maharaja embraced Khan and kissed him on his cheeks. The Begum and her lay companions were taken to a closed motor car which was brought just in front of the first class compartment, which the Begum was occupying. The Begum was taken to the house of Khan. On arrival at the house, Khan repeatedly gave lessons to the Begum and told her to be absolutely careful in the way she should act. The Maharaja and his Hindu ministers and officials were rejoicing at the idea that they would get the Begum to these festivals and each one of them excepting the Maharaja were anxious to have his sexual desires fulfilled with the Begum in retaliation to what Khan did to their women-folk.

As was customary, the women invited to these festivals were ushered into the Palace through a separate gate reserved for women. Begum Khan was taken by the lady companions of the Maharanis to the interior of the Palace and Khan joined the ministers and officials, specially invited to these functions, by the main gate of

the Palace. The Englishmen and other officers in the employment of the Maharaja with whom the Maharaja was not free were not invited to these festivals at night.

Sumptuous food and intoxicating drinks were served to women and similarly delicious food was kept for men. The men on one side and the women on the other side got intoxicated with alcoholic drinks and when they were thoroughly happy and gay they were brought into contact with each other. The orgies at that time would too start in full swing.

The Begum was fully trained by Khan and, as a matter of fact, her profession was such that no training was necessary to carry out faithfully the commands of her husband. She was more pleased at these festivals than anyone else and she gave such glorious time to one man after another that all of them before the day broke became enamoured of her.

Khan was having a good time with the women of the harem and others of the court and also watching what was happening to his Begum and was smiling in his heart of hearts at the wonderful device which his friends in Delhi had found to save him. The party dispersed in the early hours of the morning and Khan went back with his Begum.

Next morning, the Maharaja was so much pleased with the courtesy shown by Khan that a sum of half a million rupees was sent as a present to the Begum to buy jewellery and dresses from the best shops in Bombay and Calcutta. At the request of Khan the Begum was allowed to go to Calcutta and Bombay for making the necessary purchases for the future festivals. Khan heaved a sigh of relief when he left the borders of the State with the Begum for Calcutta and Bombay. On arrival at Calcutta he again played another hoax which upto the death of the Maharaja was not known to anyone. That was that he informed the Maharaja by a telegram from Calcutta that his wife had an attack of appendicitis and that she would not be able to return to the capital for some time. Another telegram was sent after some days saying that the opera-

tion was not successful and that the Begum died. The Maharaja sent letters and telegrams of condolence to Khan. The Maharaja and his courtiers were in great grief at her death. They remembered the voluptuous time which she gave them at the festival when she offered to them the precious gift of her body and vivacious self.

## 54 *All Over Cold Soda*

**H**IS HIGHNESS MAHARAJA Gobind Singh — Bundela Rajput — was ruler of Datia in Madhya Pradesh and enjoyed a salute of fifteen guns. He was a bad administrator and like other princes indulged in shooting, hunting, women and wine. The administration collapsed and the Viceroy of India ordered that Chief Minister of the State should be the nominee of the Government of India and the Maharaja should have no say in the administration.

Rai Bahadur Kahan Chand who was formerly Minister of Revenue in Patiala State was appointed by the Viceroy of India to be the Chief Minister of Datia, after the exit of Sir Aziz Ahmed who was in charge of the administration of Datia State for many years. Kahan Chand was one of the ablest ministers of his time, being well-versed in revenue and administrative matters, but unfortunately he did not stay long in that State as he did not know the craft and tactics of pleasing the British political officers and of arranging receptions and shooting big and small games and dinners for them, whenever they visited the State. Aziz Ahmed stayed for a long time in Datia because of the fact that he knew how to entertain the political officers and their wives when they visited Datia State. My wife Sushila and I were invited by Rai Bahadur who was my colleague in the Patiala Cabinet to be his guests in the Chief Minister's house of Datia.

During our stay there, Sir Kenneth Fitze, the British Resident for Central India arrived in Datia from Indore and was received by the Maharaja and Chief Minister and other officials with great pomp and show. At night, there was a small private dinner at the main guest house where the Resident was put up. To this exclusive party he was also invited. The soda water was not cold enough for the whisky offered to the

Resident. He flared up and talked rudely to Rai Bahadur Kahan Chand and told him that he was a poor administrator and was not fit to be the Chief Minister of Datia State. Since that episode, the relationship between Sir Kenneth Fitze and Rai Bahadur Kahan Chand were estranged and after a few months I came to know from Rai Bahadur Kahan Chand that he was asked to quit the post of Chief Minister and he was dubbed as an incapable administrator. The concentration of power with the Residents brought in its wake corruption and favouritism and the revenues of the State were divided between the political officials and their entourage and the minions of the Palace.

Later on Syed Amin-ud-Din, an officer of the Punjab Civil Service who was the henchman of the political officers was appointed as Chief Minister. He ruled the State with the iron hand of tyranny. His only qualification was that he knew how to arrange shooting and hunting parties for the political agents and entertain them and their wives. The public was tired of his administration and there was a complete hartal (strike) in the town of Datia asking for the dismissal of Syed Amin-ud-Din. At that time Mr. Egerton was the Political Agent and Mr. Patterson was the Resident at Indore. The Maharaja was too weak and powerless to handle the situation and to throw out Amin-ud-Din. The strike was so complete that even the Maharaja could not get food-stuffs from the market.

Mr. B. B. Tawakley Senior Advocate of Supreme Court, was the Legal Adviser to the Maharaja. He was asked to come from Delhi to advise him on this critical situation. On arrival at Datia and after consulting the Maharaja, Mr. Tawakley asked Syed Amin-ud-Din as to what price he would accept for quitting the State. He told Mr. Tawakley that he would be satisfied with Rs. 25,000 if the Maharaja paid him that amount quietly. On the intervention of Mr. Tawakley the Maharaja agreed to pay that amount but before leaving for shooting tigers, the Maharaja instructed the Inspector General of Police that the relatives of Syed

Amin-ud-Din who were employed in the senior posts should be detained. On hearing this Amin-ud-Din refused to go until all his relatives and friends were also allowed to go along with him. Amin-ud-Din went to Delhi and met Sir Conrad Corfield, Political Adviser to the Viceroy and told him what was happening in Datia. Corfield was enraged to hear of the Maharaja's insolence and revolt and he immediately left for Datia. On arrival at Datia, Corfield threatened the Maharaja that he would be deposed and that he had no power to dismiss the Chief Minister who was appointed by the Viceroy of India. While the exchange of hot words was going on between the Maharaja and the Political Adviser and other political officers for the retention of Syed Amin-ud-Din as Chief Minister, it was decided that Mr. Tawakley should go to Delhi and apprise the Government of India of the situation. But, in the meantime, a message was brought to the Maharaja by his brother-in-law, Maharaja Jagannampuri, that Corfield has agreed to abide by the wishes of the Maharaja and to remove Amin-ud-Din if he was given Rs. 3 lakhs as a gift. Mr. Tawakley advised the Maharaja not to accept this proposition and then he went to Delhi and saw Sirdar Baldev Singh through Mr. Gilani who was his Private Secretary and apprised him of the political situation in Datia State. Sirdar Baldev Singh spoke to Sirdar Vallabhbhai Patel Home Minister of the Government of India who called a Cabinet Meeting and immediately a letter was sent to Lord Mountbatten, Viceroy of India that Mr. Patterson should take his hands off from the State affairs of Datia and that the embargo on the Maharaja that he could not appoint a Chief Minister of his own choice should be removed. On receipt of this letter from the Home Minister of the Government of India, Lord Mountbatten ordered that Mr. Egerton should be suspended and in his place Colonel Woods Ballard should be appointed as Political Agent and that in future the Maharaja should have the power to appoint a Chief Minister of his choice. The Maharaja then appointed Mr.

Vishen Chander as Chief Minister and ruled the State with full powers of a sovereign till the State was integrated in the Union of India in 1948.



## 55 *Escapade to French India*

**T**HERE ARE A number of interesting rather thrilling episodes concerning the ruling princes of India both before and after the British suzerainty. Most of those incidents are pertaining to the personal life and idiosyncrasies of the rulers themselves, yet there are some incidents which are very thrilling as they happen to be sort of quarrels between the political department of the Government of India and the rulers of the Indian States.

One of them concerns His Highness Tikko Rao Pawar, Maharaja of Dewas State in Central India. Maharaja Tikko Rao Pawar was a very amiable and shrewd prince full of intelligence, wit and humour. He was very popular among both the brother princes as well as the officers of the British Government. He dressed always in immaculate white and wore a dhoti instead of trousers or pyjamas. His good qualities were that he was a very good historian and a poet in Marathi. He was married to the daughter of the Maharaja of Kolhapur, Her Highness Akka Sahib, from whom he had a son by the name of Vikram. A lapse on the part of the Maharaja became a turning point in his life.

The Maharaja fell in love with the maid servant of the Maharani and brought her from Kolhapur in his royal railway saloon to Dewas and kept her at the Palace, first as a mistress and later on as his morganatic wife. This caused estrangement between the Maharaja and the Maharani so much so that the Maharani returned to Kolhapur leaving the Maharaja and her son in Dewas. Akka Sahib was also a very intelligent person well-versed in riding and shooting. On account of the strained relationship between them, the Maharani while living at Kolhapur started a regular campaign to involve Maharaja Tikko Rao in political difficulties, which caused great harassment to the Maharaja with the result

that he had to spend enormous sums to protect and defend himself.

Her Highness Akka Sahib was very popular with officials of the political department and she succeeded in making the political department to feel quite adverse to the Maharaja, to such an extent that Sir B. J. Glancey, Political Secretary to the Government of India wrote a letter to the Maharaja that he should either abdicate or accept a commission of enquiry. The allegations against the Maharaja were that he was misruling and sequestering the State as he had created jagirs in favour of the daughters begotten of the second wife whom the Government of India did not recognise as a regular consort of the Maharaja.

Mr. B. B. Tawakley, an eminent lawyer of the Supreme Court, was acting as the Legal Adviser to the Maharaja Tikko Rao Pawar and one afternoon he received a telegram in Delhi asking him to reach Dewas by the first train, and if possible, by air. So he took the first train to Dewas and next afternoon he was in Dewas comfortably lodged in the Prabha Vilas Palace. To his great surprise, till the evening, nobody came to him. He had his dinner and went to bed when at about 11.30 p.m. an order came from the Maharaja that he should go to him to the City Palace where the Maharaja was staying and was ushered into a small room where he was squatting on the floor. On his arrival, he opened his office box and handed over the letter to him which was from the Political Department saying that either he should abdicate or accept a commission of enquiry. The Maharaja asked him what he should do. Knowing fully well the financial condition of the Maharaja, he told the Maharaja that it would be inadvisable to accept a commission of enquiry and therefore the only alternative would be to abdicate in favour of his son. The Maharaja was in a habit of rubbing his index finger on his forehead when he was worried. He did the same for a minute or so and then said, "I do not want Vikram to come to the throne of Dewas so long as I am alive but after me no one but Vikram should come to

the throne of Dewas." This remark caused a little bewilderment to Mr. Tawakley, yet it was strangely spontaneous. Mr. Tawakley suggested that in that case the Maharaja should go to Pondicherry or Chandranagar after appointing a Council of Ministers to rule the State on his behalf. The Maharaja accepted the suggestion and asked him to make sure whether any passport was necessary to go to Pondicherry or Chandranagar as they were French possessions in those days. So Mr. Tawakley was asked to go from Dewas at once to Ratlam that very night to catch the Frontier Mail at Ratlam in the morning for Delhi. After making himself absolutely sure in Delhi that no passport was necessary for going over to these places, he informed the Maharaja accordingly.

The Maharaja announced next day in the capital that he was going out on a pilgrimage to the South and after collecting everything he could lay his hands on, he left Dewas by special train for Bhopal with a cavalcade of about 200 people and thence to Madras by the Grand Trunk Express. After reaching Madras, some motor vehicles were engaged to carry the party to Trivandrum in the South of India and when this cavalcade of motor vehicles was on its way to Trivandrum, the Maharaja began to complain that he had some pain in his stomach and that the party should halt at the nearest place for medical advice and treatment and so they reached Pondicherry. The Maharaja had already sent an escort party to Pondicherry to arrange two good houses for the stay of the whole party there. The next day Mr. Tawakley received a telegram from the Maharaja asking him to reach Pondicherry. On reaching Pondicherry, the Maharaja asked Mr. Tawakley to meet the Governor of the French possessions to ascertain from him that in case the Government of India made a demand on the French Government to hand over the Maharaja to them what would be the attitude of the French Government. He met the Governor and told him that the reigning Maharaja of Dewas had come to Pondicherry leaving his own State and country to take shelter

under the banner of the French Government of India, and asked him what would be his position. The Governor replied that if the Maharaja had committed no criminal offence but was merely a fugitive on account of political troubles, no power on earth could take him away if he had come under the banner of the French Government. He also said that if any monetary help was needed he would recommend the matter to his Government. Mr. Tawakley thanked him for the offer and said that the Maharaja was not in need of any financial help.

A few days later, a letter was received by the Maharaja from the Viceroy of India that either the Maharaja should come back to Dewas or the Government would take possession of the State. The Maharaja wrote back that he would be back in Dewas at his own sweet will and pleasure and since he had appointed a council to rule the State in his absence, no one could lay hands on the administration of the State.

In this way the Government of India and officials of the Political Department were baffled. The Maharaja lived for more than three years at Pondicherry and was getting his regular privy purse and his determination that Vikram should not come to the throne as long as he was alive was fulfilled.

## 56 *Adoption and Succession*

**T**HE BRITISH GOVERNMENT had the rulers in their grip by keeping reserved the power and the right to approve adoption and succession. Whenever a ruler died his heir or successor must be approved by the King of England and similar was the case when a ruler had no issue and wished to adopt someone. He had to get the approval of the British Government. It is there that the political officers of the Government of India used their wit and skill in extracting gifts in fulfilling the desire of the rulers.

Here is a very interesting case of the Maharaja of Bijawar who died on the night of Deepawali, leaving an issue. He had one son alive at the time by the name of Aman Singh who was much respected by the officers of the State, Jagirdars and Thakurs and Maharaja of Bijawar left a will to the effect that Aman Singh should be his heir and successor. After the death of the Maharaja, the dowager Maharani of Bijawar pleaded the case of Aman Singh against the claims of Malkan Singh, a collateral, who had the backing of the Viceroy of India. In spite of all the efforts of the Maharani and the Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes and the other Maharajas, poor Aman Singh was given a small pension which was hardly sufficient for his livelihood. He was specially punished as he was the son-in-law of Maharaja Bhupinder Singh of Patiala, who was not on friendly terms with the British Government. There are hundreds of such instances when the rightful heirs were deprived of the Gadi of the State.

Regarding honours, salutes and decorations and rights of succession and adoption, the reader can guess to what depth the rulers had to fall at the feet of the British Government by seeking their favours in such trifling matters, while they were autocratic and tyrannical to their own subjects.

The foreign writers who visited India recently were amazed at the veneration and respect the people still had for the former rulers, when they saw with their own eyes their servants prostrating at the feet of the Maharajas and worship them like gods. They were flabbergasted to see the jewels, famous diamonds, pearl necklaces, their magnificent palaces, their brilliant and ancient dresses with crowns and decorations, their gold and silver carriages, decorated and jewelled elephants and other paraphernalia. Their remembrance and admiration for the Maharajas made them write that they were miracles like the miracle of nuclear energy and inter-planetary exploits. They have even mentioned in their books that these palaces, jewels gold and silver carriages were the temples which were now deserted as the gods had disappeared but these temples still remembered them and again create their gods. The idea is no doubt poetic but is far from reality. These writers are ignorant of the fact that these precious jewels and wealth were collected by the rulers at a time when India was invaded by the Mughals and other invaders before them and then the rulers got their share of the loot and carried jewels and precious stones of the booty on camels and elephants to their States.

Whatever the foreigners say about the future of the rulers, it is certain that these so-called temples will not have the same gods again.

## 57     *The Pasha's Daughter*

**M**ANY YEARS AGO, at a dinner party given by a common American friend, I met a Turkish woman still in her teens by the name of Lemma, more popularly known as "Laila". She was the daughter of His Excellency Izzat Pasha Al Abid, Minister at the Court of Sultan Abdul Hamid II of Turkey. It was at Chateau De Madrid, a fashionable hotel in Bois De Bolougne in Paris, where she resided with her mother. Soon we became fond of each other.

I had heard a great deal about the Damascusian beauty. Laila was born and brought up in Damascus in her early youth and later in Istanbul in Turkey in the atmosphere of the Court and its intrigues. I was much attracted by her exquisite beauty and the charm of her ivory complexion.

At that time I was Minister to Maharaja Jagatjit Singh of Kapurthala who, with his shrewd eye, began to suspect my love for Laila. He did not like the idea of my having a permanent liaison with her as he thought that this relationship would not give me time to go with him on tours round the world.

The father of Laila, Izzat Pasha, the right hand man of His Majesty Sultan Abdul Hamid of Turkey had so much influence on the Sultan that he could make him do whatever he liked. He was instrumental in contracting treaties with foreign powers and had extracted millions of pounds for himself in helping one foreign power after another.

The Sultan was always in danger of his life, on account of the young Turks movement, and lived in a secret place away from his official residence, and Izzat Pasha protected him and had gained his great confidence and was thus virtually the ruler of Turkey.

Izzat Pasha used to take strong alcoholic drinks at night and he would not do any Government work

when he was drinking, nor would he move or see anyone except the Sultan. He used to have special perfumes prepared in the form of pills which he used to put in his mouth before he went to see the Sultan, so that he may not smell liquor.

The Sultan, being abstemious, was averse to the use of alcohol and he never took wine or liquor of any kind throughout his life. With these perfumed pills in his mouth, Izzat Pasha approached the Sultan who could never detect that the Pasha had taken any intoxicants, though a little puffiness under the eye-lids sometimes betrayed him. He was the favourite of the Sultan, although ministers and other officers of the Government opposed him for his interference in political matters. Not only he got his opponents dismissed by the Sultan but most of them were thrown into the Bosphorus from the balcony overlooking the sea.

Hundreds of important political leaders and high military figures were thrown into the Bosphorous every year and it was due to this tyranny that the young Turks revolted against the Sultan and the movement gathered strength. It was to avenge the life of these men who were sacrificed at the altar of patriotism that the Turks revolted against Sultan Abdul Hamid and his Chief Advisor, Izzat Pasha and ultimately exiled them to Salonica.

Sultan Abdul Hamid was the husband of 350 wives, beautiful voluptuous women living in luxury, and always ready to obey the slightest whim of their master. In his harem, women spent their whole time in dressing, eating, sleeping and whiling away time with gossip and intrigue.

Once a girl entered the harem, she seldom left it during her lifetime. The favourite amongst them was granted many privileges, greatest being an invitation to share the Sultan's bed. Tradition decreed that she had always to crawl up from the foot of the bed until she was level with him. The next step in the social rung for an ambitious favourite was to become one of the four established favourites who had the supreme



honour of giving the Sultan a male child.

But there the scale of her social ladder ended and at the top of it was enthroned the Sultan's mother, who was the real Ruler of the harem. The great Seraglio or Palace of the Sultan was an example of harem life in its most corrupt form.

Far from being a love nest for dissolute Sultans, it was a hive of treachery and cruelty. Girls were treated as slaves or captured as the booty of war. If they pandered to the Sultan's desires, they rose to be his favourites. If they failed to please him in any way, they were sewn up alive in sacks and thrown into the nearby sea, sometimes as many as 300 at a time.

There was a Woman's Military Guard of Caucasian women, strong and well-built, who controlled the harem and if any woman disobeyed the Sultan, she was bodily removed and thrown into the Bosphorus. Until as late as the current century, the secrets of the Turkish Seraglio were closely guarded from the outside world. Occasionally, a Sultan would let travellers watch a ceremony in certain parts of the Palace, but the inner rooms where the women were housed were never penetrated by the eye of an outsider.

The veil was rudely torn aside when the young Turks rose in 1909 and deposed Abdul Hamid II. It was discovered that he had 370 women and 127 eunuchs in his service. The people revolted and Abdul Hamid was sent into exile with a few of his favourites and the relatives of the remaining women were asked to come and take them away.

There were touching scenes when the weather beaten Circassian shepherds came down from the mountains to claim their daughters who had been snatched from them by the Sultan's hirelings. There were sad moments also when relatives sought in vain for their daughters who had been wiped out of existence by the Sultan's orders.

If a member of the harem was ill and a doctor had to be called, very elaborate precautions were taken to prevent him from seeing more of the patient than was

strictly necessary. If the doctor asked to see her tongue, the servant's hands would cover the rest of her face and he was only allowed to examine her back by gazing through a hole cut in a sheet of cloth.

Before proceeding with the story, it will be of interest to the reader to know the harem life of the Turkish Sultan.

Izzat Pasha, the father of Laila, being the most powerful man of his day in the reign of the Sultan had amassed fabulous wealth. The Sultan used to have live dummies which resembled him in appearance and physique. Many times a dummy used to go in the carriage driven by horses for Friday prayers to the great mosque, and on the way the dummy was shot at by the revolutionaries, but the real Sultan remained at the Palace and was always safe. It remained a mystery to the people how the Sultan was still alive after being shot dead. The secret of it was that he never appeared in person in public, while his dummies replaced him in the same dress or uniform worn for the occasion.

The Sultan had many palaces and in each palace there were many cellars and most of the time he was hiding himself in one of them, while to the public it was known that he was living at his official residence which was the target of attack by the revolutionaries. To their disappointment and despair, they found that the Sultan could not be the victim of their attacks. The revolutionary movement, however, increased in tempo and the Sultan's position became very precarious. Laila was brought up in the Palace of Izzat Pasha in great luxury and comfort and she was given the best of education by European, Turkish and Arabic tutors. She could speak English, French, Spanish and Italian fluently. Turkish and Arabic were her mother-tongues. Often she dressed in European clothes and occasionally she was in Turkish dress with a veil in transparent silk through which one could see her face. In fact, with her exquisite beauty, figure, and her culture she was a superb specimen of her sex.

When our friendship developed, she took a flat

secretly in Avenue De Bois, a fashionable and luxurious Avenue in Paris where she lived with her mother, and I visited her whenever I could find time after attending to my duties with the Maharaja. He wanted me to be constantly in attendance on him, and whenever I was away he guessed that I must be with Laila. One day he told me that my meeting her frequently meant that I was not devoting my full time to his attendance.

During my travels with the Maharaja round the world, I arranged somehow or the other that Laila should meet me somewhere in USA or in South American countries, or in some part of Europe wherever I went with the Maharaja. For several years, the Maharaja never knew that I was meeting Laila secretly in different places. This life was distasteful to Laila and she told me many times that we should make no secret of our love and live a married life.

I approached the Maharaja on the subject but the Maharaja gave me an ultimatum that either I should remain in his service or marry her, but on account of the traditional loyalty towards the Maharaja's person and throne, as well as for the fact that my family members and friends employed in the Government in important posts would be harassed or dismissed if I accepted the challenge, I thought the best course for me was to give up the idea of marriage.

Laila persuaded me to marry her secretly when she saw me in Deau-Ville, a fashionable seaside place in France on the coast of Atlantic, where we had gone for a holiday. As it was not possible for us to get married according to Civil Rules and Regulations we found a Hindu priest by the name of Doctor D. C. Verma who performed the rites of marriage with a few pieces of wood lit in a secluded part of a garden, and poured butter into the fire in order to perform the marriage ceremony. Laila and I were asked to go round the fire seven times and were then declared husband and wife. Afterwards a marriage contract was drawn up which was signed by Laila and myself with two witnesses, one of whom was the eminent lawyer, Mr. Arthur

Simms, Barrister-at-Law of Inner Temple, London. This marriage was not known to anyone excepting those who participated in this ceremony.

When the Maharaja planned to go to South America, she persuaded me not to go there and asked me to declare that we were husband and wife publicly. I told the Maharaja about the secret marriage and requested him not to take me to South America. The Maharaja became furious and wanted my resignation immediately which I thought I should not hand over as I knew what would be the fate of my brother and relatives in the service of the Government.

I went with the Maharaja to South America for several months. We came to New York via Panama Canal where Laila was waiting for me at the Hotel Plaza where she had been staying. The Maharaja and I lived in New York in the same hotel for several weeks but this secret was not known to the Maharaja.

On our return to Europe, on a French Steamer called "Ile De France", she also took up a double berthed de luxe cabin in the same steamer and came on board incognito and unseen by the Maharaja, as she used to shut herself up the whole day and night in her luxurious cabin. I had a cabin in my name, but I spent most of my time with Laila in her cabin. When we reached Paris, the Maharaja was much pleased with me because of my obedience to his wishes and for leaving behind Laila in Paris.

Laila's adventures with me became known to Izzat Pasha who was living at that time in Cairo in exile. He divorced his wife and disinherited Laila. Their allowances were stopped and they did not have any means of livelihood. I had to supply funds to them in accordance with my means. Whenever I came to Paris or passed through Cairo I paid her debts and left her sufficient funds for several month's expenditure. Whatever savings I used to make were spent on clearing the debts of Laila which ran to thousands of pounds. This state of affairs went on for many years and my fortune was nearly exhausted.

Izzat Pasha who was already 76 years of age got seriously ill with a serious attack of gout and other complications and was on death-bed. Laila left Paris for Cairo with her mother to be near her father. With her usual charm and tact, she penetrated into the bedroom of her father and began to nurse him. After her visit to Mecca, Izzat Pasha's heart was already softened towards Laila and her mother, and on the request of Laila, the Sultan of Hedjas intervened on behalf of Laila to bring about a reconciliation between the father and her mother. A few days before his death, Izzat Pasha forgave her and her mother and she became one of the legal heirs to her father's big fortune amounting to several millions of pounds sterling. A few months after the death of Izzat Pasha, she decided to visit India to meet me.

I met her in Bombay where I reserved for her a suite of rooms in the Taj Mahal Hotel. In Bombay Mr. M. A. Jinnah, who afterwards became the Governor-General of Pakistan, when India was partitioned, entertained us to dinner and was pleased at this alliance. Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, who is considered to be one of the greatest women of this epoch and has played an important part in India's Independence Movement, blessed our union and invited us to tea at her suite of rooms at the Taj Mahal Hotel.

From Bombay we went to Mysore after visiting Poona for a couple of days. His Highness the Yuvraj of Mysore, who was a personal friend of mine, received us at Bangalore and put us up at the magnificent palace, Jay Mahal, as his guests.

Sir Mirza Ismail, Prime Minister of Mysore, gave a banquet in our honour to which he invited most of the important members of the society in Bangalore as well as ministers and high officials. From Bangalore we went to Mysore by car accompanied by His Highness the Yuvraj of Mysore. The journey was comfortable and did not take more than a few hours to reach Mysore. Again we were put up at the best guest house usually reserved for the Viceroys and the distinguished

guests of the Maharaja. The Maharaja received us at his Palace and entertained us to a dinner party though he did not eat anything himself, being a strictly orthodox Hindu who would take his food alone in a special room, devoid of all furniture and sprinkled with Ganges water to make it sacred and pure.

The dinner party was followed by music, conducted by the famous musicians of Mysore. About 70 to 80 men with Indian musical instruments such as Veena, Sitar, Jaltarang and similar oriental musical instruments were playing the tunes. The Palace was illuminated and the whole town celebrated our visit to the State. We were taken to Chaumindi Goddess Temple which is on the top of a hill, six or seven miles from Mysore. This temple was electrified and the whole route was lit on both sides with electric lamps. It was a sight worth seeing when from that temple one looked at the Palace and the town.

A thrilling fight between two elephants was shown to us during our visit there. The elephants were ferocious and both were intoxicated for fighting ferociously. After a few hours of fighting the elephant of the Maharaja beat the elephant of the Yuvraj, whose elephant fled away before an audience of seven thousand people crying and howling loudly. It was caught with great difficulty after being speared many times by the cavalymen who stood in the arena and followed the defeated elephant so that it may not attack the passers-by.

Laila and I also visited Banaras, the sacred city of the Hindus. There she was accosted by the astrologers and palmists who predicted that she would not make India her home. The burning ghats made her very gloomy and depressed though the Maharaja of Banaras entertained us lavishly and a large special barge with silk awning and liveried boatmen was placed at our disposal and we were put up in Nandesar Palace. This Palace is generally reserved for distinguished guests, such as Viceroys, Heads of foreign Governments and the Maharajas.

A magnificent garden in 15 to 20 acres of land with water flowing all around like the Mughal gardens surrounded the Palace. It was built of marble and it was there that King Edward VII and other British Monarchs stayed whenever they visited the State. The Palace was specially constructed for the visit of King Edward VII to Banaras at the time of his coronation.

From Banaras we went to Kapurthala where the Maharaja had ordered that street-lights should remain on even after midnight as the train which brought us to Kapurthala arrived at about five in the morning. Normally, the lights were put off after midnight for economic reasons. The lights were on when we entered the city and special waiters in gorgeous uniforms were sent from the Palace to serve breakfast and special food at my house called 'Ambaltas' which was furnished in modern European style. The garden looked picturesque with multi-coloured flowers and tropical plants. My eldest brother Diwan Sureshar Dass, Chief Justice of the State, gave a grand reception to Laila the same afternoon while my mother and the high priest of my family performed religious ceremonies which were customary when the bride entered her husband's home for the first time. After all the religious ceremonies were over, Laila was entertained to a largely attended garden party given by the citizens to welcome her to the town. She wore jewellery worth two million rupees. Diamond rings adorned her slim, beautiful fingers. She bought this jewellery after the death of her father and also inherited other rare stones from her father's property.

Maharaja Jagatjit Singh of Kapurthala had ordered a special gold dinner service which he presented to her when she visited the Palace. She received many valuable presents from my various friends throughout India, including the Yuvraj of Mysore, the Maharaja of Rajpipla, the Maharaja Sayaji Rao Gaekwad of Baroda, Mr. M. A. Jinnah and others. Mr. R. D. Tata, father of Mr. J.R.D. Tata, Chairman, Tata concerns, who was a personal friend of mine, also entertained us to a

dinner in Bombay on our arrival to which he had also asked Mr. M. A. Jinnah and Mr. M. C. Chagla, ex-Foreign Minister of the Government of India, Mr. R. D. Sethna and many other important political leaders and business magnates. Mr. R. D. Tata presented Laila with a valuable ring set with a big ruby. Seeing the presents offered to Laila, the Maharajas of other States were very keen to give her more presents.

The Maharaja arranged a special reception at the Jagatjit palace, a replica of the Versailles in Paris, in her honour at 5 p.m. on the day following our arrival at Kapurthala.

The Prime Minister Sir Abdul Hamid, who was a bigoted Muslim, was perplexed to see that the Maharaja was taking so much interest in the reception of the wife of a Minister who was not on friendly terms with him. He was also furious on account of a Muslim woman embracing Hinduism by marrying a Hindu, though Sir Abdul Hamid's great grandfather was converted from Hinduism to Islam, as it was the usual practice during the Mughal period with millions of people.

Over one-fifth of the population of India was formerly converted perforce from Hinduism to Islam by Aurangzeb, the last Moghul Emperor. The Muslims who were converted from Hinduism became more bigoted and fanatical than the original inhabitants of Turkey, Arabia, Egypt and Afghanistan and other Muslim countries.

Sir Abdul Hamid's great grandfather—a Saigal—was a high caste Hindu. The members of this family, particularly in the Punjab, held high places, not only in the administrative service of the Government of India and the Government of Indian States, but in professions like commerce, industry, legal profession and others.

Sir Abdul Hamid did not possess any of the family traits after 2 or 3 generations of conversion and he was boiling with rage to see the daughter of Izzat Pasha having been converted to Hinduism. Unfortunately,



for her and myself, Swami Shradha Nand, a great spiritual leader and reformer, was assassinated by a Muslim fanatic just before the arrival of Laila in India. The Swami's cult was to preach that there should be radical reforms in Hindu society and culture, and advocated the conversion of Muslim to the Hindu faith in the same way as the Muslims had resorted before to the wholesale conversions of Hindus.

The Swami's fanatical reforms gave impetus to the agitation against Laila, conducted by the Muslims at the railway stations and the cities which she visited. When Sir Abdul Hamid was introduced by the Maharaja to Laila, he showed the venom of his hatred in the presence of the Maharaja and hundreds of other people and told her that she had no place in India, nor would she be received in this country by the Muslims or Hindus. The bigoted Muslims did not like the idea of a Hindu marrying a Mohammedan woman of such high family and pure Muslim blood not knowing that the Hindu religious rights were observed by us due to sheer necessity of peculiar circumstances in which we were placed and not due to fanaticism or proselytism on my part.

In Delhi, His Holiness Pir Hassan Nizami, Sajjadanashin Dargah Hazarat Nizam-ud-din Aulia, a well-known Muslim religious leader, expressed his disapproval of this alliance, though he was a personal friend of mine and knew my liberal ideas. Some Muslims also sent astrologers to her at the Maidens Hotel, Delhi, where we were living during our stay in the capital, to tell her that this alliance was fraught with danger to her life and future. Many times I saw her weeping and lamenting her fate.

Laila was much distressed by this trend of public opinion and gave up the idea of staying in India. Some of the newspapers began to indulge in malicious propaganda by disapproving of her marriage to a Hindu, and many Muslim organisations vehemently opposed it. When I complained to the Maharaja against the behaviour of Abdul Hamid, he took no action; on the con-

trary, he was pleased that this communal antagonism of the people might cause a rift in our relationship and induce Laila to leave the country for good.

Laila and I left Kapurthala for a short trip and after visiting Delhi for a few days went to Bombay. Here she proposed that I should give up the Maharaja's service and stay with her by going round on a world tour at her expense. She had by now inherited a big fortune of several crores of rupees on the death of her father Izzat Pasha, who having escaped from being caught by the Young Turks had begun to live in Cairo in a luxurious house.

My marriage with Laila was kept a secret from Izzat Pasha for a long time though he came to know of it two years before his death. After knowing this, he disinherited her though he was reconciled with her just a few days before his death. Having inherited a big fortune with plenty of money, she bought big residential houses in Paris, London and other places and it was only after the death of Izzat Pasha that she could visit India as my legally married wife.

When Laila was leaving for Europe, the Maharaja gave me leave only for a few days to see her off at Bombay. On the way we stopped at Delhi and she threatened to commit suicide by throwing herself from the third floor of Maidens Hotel where we had taken an apartment, if I did not accompany her to Europe.

I told her that it was not possible for me to do so without the permission of the Maharaja. Thereupon, she brought out a cheque of Rs. 50 lakhs and threw it at my feet and said that this cheque of Rs. 50 lakhs should cover more than I would get for years and years by serving the Maharaja.

Infatuated though I was with her glamorous beauty as well as her depth of affection and love for me, I tore up the cheque and told her that no amount of money could wean me away from doing my duty towards the Maharaja. However, I told her that I would try to accompany her to Paris and would ask the Maharaja for further leave. I sent a telegram to

the Maharaja for extension of leave and the Maharaja, as was expected, turned it down. This telegram was received by me at Mathura Railway Station and when I opened the telegram Laila read the contents and she jumped from the running train which had started to move and fell on the platform. I stopped the train by pulling the alarm cord. As the train was not running fast, she only got serious bruises on her face and body. Seeing her condition and firm resolve to take me to Europe, I sent another telegram to the Maharaja and expected a reply at Bombay. The Maharaja again disagreed with my request but due to pressure on him by some personal friends of mine, to whom he listened to, the Maharaja half-heartedly agreed to extend my leave for a month and a half and ordered that I should meet him in Marseilles on his next visit to Europe.

Though the Maharaja allowed me to go with her as far as France, my mother, brothers and relatives sent me frantic telegrams not to proceed further than Aden. These telegrams were read by her as well as the abusive telegrams received by me from the Muslim friends of Abdul Hamid in India. Her mind was made up to quit this country for ever and on the way to Europe she was unhappy and always talked of the ill treatment she had received in India, both from my people and from the Muslim community. After the expiration of my leave, I had to go and meet the Maharaja at Marseilles when he disembarked there.

The first question he asked me was whether I was still with Laila. I replied, "Yes, Your Highness, Laila is with me." The Maharaja felt annoyed. The Maharaja was planning to travel to various parts of Europe and he made up his mind to take me along and to separate me from Laila. This infuriated her more and more. Ultimately, she began to think that whatever the astrologers had predicted in India was coming true. The astrologers in India were bribed by some Muslims to say such irritating things to her so that she should get disgusted with myself and India.

I was fighting between love and duty as well as

the fate of hundreds of my relatives and friends who could be in serious trouble if I incurred the Maharaja's displeasure. So I was more inclined to stay with the Maharaja than to stay with Laila all my life at her expense. By nature I was so made that I could not possibly live on a woman's gifts. Throughout the period of my stay with Laila in Europe, America and India I did not let her spend a farthing from her own pocket when she was travelling with me. In this way I was a real oriental and a man.

Preparations for returning to India were made and a date was fixed for the departure of the Maharaja for his return to India sometime in the month of November.

The Maharaja used to reach India before his birthday which fell on 26th November. Laila again said that I should not go with the Maharaja and should stay with her, but I told her that I would return after three or four months and we would live again together. Hearing this she fainted and doctors were brought to attend on her. After she recovered, I accompanied the Maharaja to Marseilles from where we embarked for India. Her mother advised her to give up the idea of going to India or living with me.

Broken-hearted and against her wishes she got married to Mr. Carl Holmes of the Fleishmann yeast millions, but the marriage, as was expected, did not last more than a month and Laila obtained a divorce from him in Reno. Later, Carl Holmes filed a criminal suit against her for bigamy. A Commission came to India from U.S.A. to record my statement in this case.

## 58 *Officer for the Trousers*

**A**FTER THE YEAR 1857 when the great upheaval and revolt by the army and people of India shook the mighty throne of the British empire in India, the policy of the British Government vis-a-vis the Indian States and their Rulers took a complete turn. The proclamation by Queen Victoria of England after these tragic happenings and the tone of friendly adjustments of political relations between the rulers of Indian States and the Paramount Power clearly indicated how the wind was blowing and what was hidden beneath the changed attitude of the British rulers.

The policy of the Paramount Power was to give unlimited powers of administration to the rulers of the Indian States for making them the bulwark against the political aspirations of the people of British India. Divide and Rule was the motto of the British rulers and for this game of political diplomacy the Britishers were well-known. The rulers of the States were gradually given more and more powers till they had full powers of life and death on their subjects and full control over the finances of the States. Huge amounts of money were at their disposal. These unimaginable powers which even the great dictators of the world had not possessed swelled their heads and they began to think and believe that they were super-human beings and true descendants of great Avatars (Personification of God). In this transformation of outlook they became maglomaniacs and in this process they developed peculiar habits in their day-to-day life. The mental degeneration of the Maharajas helped the Paramount Power to have stooges throughout the length and breadth of India. The unbridled power enjoyed by the rulers affected their personal life.

Within and after 50 years of unlimited power after the revolution of 1857, most of the Maharajas got used

to the life of inactivity and utter non-chalance, which took a ridiculous turn in their personal habits. Some Maharajas became so inactive that they employed special officers on high salaries to tie their turbans and even to tie and untie the cords of their churidar pyjamas. Some expert women were employed by the Court Ministers to teach the Rulers the art of sex and love. Even some priests were engaged in the private service of the Maharajas to invoke blessings of high powers to give them sexual strength to do justice to their female companions.

It had become a deep-rooted habit with Maharaja Jagatjit Singh of Kapurthala from his childhood to seek help for tying and untying the cord of his pyjama (an Indian-styled trouser with a fine silk or cotton cord placed around the waist) which he wore on ceremonial occasions along with brocade or silk achkan with jewels and decorations which formed part of his official dress. Whenever he went to attend official functions, a special attendant of the rank of a Gazetted Officer accompanied him in case he needed his services to untie and tie his pyjama. This peculiar habit of the Maharaja was only known to the officers of the Royal Household and this meant no inconvenience to him as some Aid-de-camp was always there to help him out of this difficulty, but many a time he found himself in a fix.

Once, while the Maharaja was holidaying in London on his usual annual visit he was invited by King George V of England and Queen Empress Mary to a Ball at the Buckingham Palace which he attended in his official regalia—churidar pyjama, brocade achkan with decorations in diamonds, coronet in blue sapphires tied over his turban and precious pearl necklaces. He wore the historic belt and sword which was gifted to his ancestors by Nadir Shah, the invader. He was cordially received by the Lord Chamberlain at the Palace who presented him to the king and the queen. The Maharaja was thrilled to attend such a pompous Ball which was attended by the cream of the British society, the members of the British Government, Peers and noblemen of the realm.

When the Ball started, the Maharaja asked Her Highness Begum Aga Khan to dance with her. Begum Aga Khan who was of French nationality was a woman of extreme beauty and charm and being the wife of the best friend of the Maharaja accepted the invitation to dance. His Highness the Aga Khan was admired all over the world for his great humanitarian contribution to mankind. He was a philanthropist and was the spiritual head of the powerful Khoja community in India, Africa and various other parts of the world. He was fabulously rich. Lately, keeping up the tradition the present prince Aga Khan, grandson of the famous Aga Khan, gave the Aga Khan Palace to the nation as a gift where Mahatma Gandhi was imprisoned by the British Government and where he had fasted. Hardly the Maharaja and the Begum had taken a turn on the floor, the Lord Chamberlain came rushing towards the couple and whispered in their ears, "Their Majesties are dancing", signifying that the Maharaja and the Begum should stop dancing. It is an etiquette in the Court of England that when the King and Queen are dancing, there should not be any couple dancing on the floor. The Maharaja though unhappy over it, conformed to the protocol of the Court.

The night advanced, the Maharaja danced several times with beautiful ladies and took a few glasses of champagne and felt happy, but as usual he was careful not to surpass his limit of drinks, being not used to heavy drinking. Before joining their Imperial Majesties for supper which was laid on several large tables under glittering chandeliers on which precious gold and silver trophies and valuable historic crockery and precious cutlery in gold were placed, the Maharaja felt like going to the toilet room to empty his bladder. And as he was invited to this Ball alone and no official or minister accompanied him to this Ball he felt awkward in asking any one there to help him to untie the cord of his trousers. After some hesitation he felt obliged to tell Sir Clive Wigram, Private Secretary to the King, of his plight and asked him whether his Chief Attendant, Inder Singh who was sitting in the car outside the Palace

alongwith the chauffeur of his car, could be called in to help him out of this impasse. First, Sir Clive remarked, "How this could be possible, Your Highness?" but later he agreed to the request of the Maharaja after hurriedly getting the approval of the Lord Chamberlain. The King had forbidden the attendants of the guests to enter the Palace at that hour of the night. The Maharaja heaved a sigh of relief after S. Inder Singh was rushed into the toilet room. Later, Sir Clive and the Lord Chamberlain quietly informed the King of this episode who loudly remarked, "What a sportsman the Maharaja of Kapurthala is!" However, this was a lesson for the Maharaja who never accepted afterward any official invitation unless he was accompanied by a Staff Officer.

Similar was his plight with his turbans. A Special Officer called Musahib (Aid-de-Camp) was always in attendance at the Palace to tie the turban round the head of the Maharaja. The Officer to be on safe side kept several ready-made turbans tied on his own head which was of the same size and shape as those of the Maharaja.

Similar was the case with Maharaja Bhupinder Singh of Patiala and most of the Sikh rulers who had long hair and beard. Maharaja Bhupinder Singh used to wear coloured turbans in accordance with the season and different functions which he attended. For instance, he would wear yellow coloured turban in spring, red coloured turban on the occasion of marriage, black coloured turban while attending religious ceremonies. In the Mysore State ready-made turbans were manufactured in large quantities in the factories and the Maharaja and the royal families and noble men of high society wore them just like hats.



## 59 *Copying the Elephants*

**J**AGATJIT SINGH, THE Maharaja of Kapurthala, weighed 19 stones at the age of 19. As it was customary in the Indian States that the young Maharajas should be trained quietly in the mysterious science of sex, the ministers of the Court always employed trained beautiful young women from the professional dancing class to train the Maharajas in the art of love and sex so that they joyfully live sex life with the Maharanis and the concubines.

In spite of all the efforts of experienced dancing girls who gave the Maharaja practical training in this art by sharing his bed, it was rather impossible for the Maharaja to have sex relationship due to his excessive fatness and heavy weight. Many poses were practised but none could be effective, to the great anxiety of the Royal Court and the Prime Minister. Experienced beautiful professional women were brought from Lahore, the centre of fun and frolic, and from Lucknow, the centre of Muslim culture and art, but they also failed to achieve the object. Ultimately it struck an experienced middle-aged woman by the name of Munna Jan that if due to excessive fatness of the belly of the Maharaja no poses could bring about the tangible results, the pose adopted by elephants could be tried. The Officer in charge of elephants, Sirdar Daulat Khan, was summoned to the Palace and was interrogated about the sexual habits of the elephants. It was disclosed by him that the elephants did not cohabit in custody, not because they were shy but they required proper pose and angle for cohabitation which was not possible in the zoos or Phil Khanas (abode of elephants). Therefore for mating the elephants they built in the woods a slanting short size hillock with stone and mud strong enough to hold the weight of a pair of elephants and at the time of cohabitation the female elephant would

lie on the slanting position on her back while the male elephant would lie flat on the top of his consort to perform the sex act.

The new idea of Munna Jan appealed to the Prime Minister and the Court Minister. Mr. Elmore (an Englishman), Chief Engineer of the State, who afterwards built the famous Jagatjit Palace in Kapurthala was instructed to build a special reclining bed of wood and steel with spring mattresses with instructions to complete the construction of the bed within a week. As soon as the bed was ready, it was placed at the disposal of Munna Jan who instructed her young attractive companions to rehearse the act with the Maharaja. To the great rejoicing of the Court officials and the members of the royal family, the act was successful. Later the Maharaja had the pleasant honeymoon with the Maharani at Dharamsala and after 9 months a son was born to the Maharaja who was given the name of Paramjit Singh. The event was celebrated with great pomp and show, all over the principal cities and villages of the State and the Viceroy of India and the King of England were informed of the birth of the heir apparent who sent to the Maharaja congratulations on this happy occasion.

Munna Jan was rewarded with massive gold anklets and precious ornaments and further she was given a life allowance of one thousand rupees per month for her life time and a house for her residence.

## 60 *The Cradle of Culture*

**K**ASHMIR IS A dreamland full of delight and beauty set in the heart of the Himalayas. Its beauty of nature, its villages, its meadows, its hills, its snowclad high peaks, the learning and art of its people, their physical charms, its history of culture and civilisation have been the theme of poets and historians. These have been sung and written by poets and writers both of the East and West. Snowclad peaks, sparkling streams, majestically dense forests, sprawled tiny villages, extensive orchards with fruit and vegetation, limpid lakes of crystal waters, the great opportunities of trout fishing and big game shooting, enable the outside visitor to realise why the Mughal Emperors described Kashmir as the 'Paradise' on earth. It is said in the Persian language "Agar Firdaus Bar Rue Zamin ast, Hamin Ast, O Hamin ast." Translated in English it means: "If there is a paradise on earth, it is this, it is this, it is this".

Called by some the Happy Valley, Kashmir has been for centuries past the fountainhead of art and culture in the East, apart from being an answer to man's eternal craving for the scenic grandeur and beauty of nature. And from Kashmir arts, handicrafts, her music, customs and ideas, one could easily form an idea of her artistic and cultural heritage.

Kashmir has a great past. Its history is perhaps more ancient than that of any other part of India.

The Aryans, when they first set foot on Indian soil, made Kashmir as one of their earliest homes. Seekers after truth from far and wide came to Kashmir for learning and knowledge. Shaivism of the new form grew and thrived here and then spread enlightenment to other parts of Asia. A distinctive cultural and spiritual tradition was thus founded in Kashmir, and shrines and temples reminding the people of this high tradition sprung in different parts of the country. The architectu-

ral ruins and remnants today are the reminders of those high and brilliant spiritual values.

Truly has it been remarked by Dr. Neve in his book, **Thirty Years in Kashmir** that "ancient India has nothing more worthy of its early civilisation than the grand remains of Kashmir—the great Martand temple situated near the sacred springs of Bhavan or Mattan on the Srinagar Pahalgam road."

The temples of Awantipur and Pandrethan and the ruins of Paraspur, the temples of Pattan, the remains Harwan, perhaps only one of the oldest kind in India, the cave temples of the fifth and sixth centuries at Bhanjo near Anantanag and higher above the ruined temple near Thyon and Vangat in the Harmukay peak, the temple of Shankaracharya—the ruins of Pari Mahal, the Shah Hamdan, a mosque—the Hari Parbat fort, the Juma Masjid—the Khanka Mulla at Khaniyar and numerous other specimens of architectural greatness, all combine to give a vivid impression of how different influences from the Buddhist Gandhara, Hindi and Islamic architecture, give the Kashmir architecture a peculiar character.

For centuries before Christ the spiritual and intellectual greatness of India in general and Kashmir in particular had reached the acme of its fame, far beyond the confines of the Eastern world. Varied thought currents went to other parts of Asia from the Nara Nag University of Kashmir which was the fountainhead of knowledge and learning and its literary and cultural movements became dynamic forces in time. The Chinese traveller Heun Tsang when he came to study in Kashmir (631-33 A.D.) was so full of praise for the learning and erudition of Kashmir Pandits that his record of the visit is an eternal tribute to their achievements in high learning and spiritual attainments. "This country was distinguished in learning from remote times," wrote Heun Tsang with the pen of admiration, "and their priests were all of high religious merit and conspicuous virtue as well as marked talent and power of clear expression of doctrines and thought. The priests

of other countries were distinguished in their own way. They could not be compared to these, so different were they from the ordinary classes."

Still another authoritative account after Heun Tsang comes from the pen of Ou-K'ong, who came to Kashmir in 760 A.D. and lived in the valley for four years and wore the garb of a Buddhist Bhikshu. He says that there were more than 300 monasteries in Kashmir and religion was flourishing.

Through centuries Kashmir attracted saints and scholars from afar because of its peculiar geographical position and being the meeting ground of different land routes bounded by Tibet in the East, Chinese Turkistan and Russia on the North and Afghanistan on the West, it served as an important rendezvous for various races and ideas.

All land routes connecting the East and West as well as the various parts of the Eastern world converged in Kashmir. Religious missionaries and priests, traders and travellers, pilgrims and political emissaries and official itinerants, all came and influenced and enriched the life of the people.

Kashmir and its background is so vast and prolific that one could write volumes but the main object of the present is to write the story of Gilgit, with its vital strategic position as a part of Kashmir and Central Asia. The valley of Kashmir has indeed been called the Jewel of Asia, the Eden of the East, the Terrestrial Paradise of the Indies, and so on, by various writers, but the country as a whole sheltered by the narrow mountain passes and towering ranges of the Karakoram and Himalayas is of great interest to the people of the whole world, governed by strategy of interests today more than aesthetic attractions.

For administrative purposes the state had been divided into four provinces: 1. Jammu, 2. Kashmir, 3. Ladakh and 4. Frontier Province of Gilgit, comprising the settled districts and the political agency covering the outlying districts and principalities of Hunza, Nagar, Punial, Yasin and Ishkoman.

In all the four divisions, Governors appointed by the Kashmir Government carried on the administration but in Gilgit the pattern was a bit different owing to the presence of the Political Agent, a representative of the British Government.

The Political Agent residing at Gilgit held jurisdiction over the outlying district which, though under Kashmir suzerainty with their governors, came in due course to be the exclusive beat of the British Political Agent. It was this sort of dual government coupled with the strategic importance of the place that resulted in the eventual slipping away of the trans-Indus portion of the Gilgit province from the control of Kashmir in 1935 on a lease of sixty years in favour of the British Government of India.

Kashmir's unique geographical position on the map of India makes it one of the most strategic points in the world. Lying to the north-west of India the State of Jammu and Kashmir is the converging point of many big powers. Its boundaries extend from the northern outskirts of the vast alluvial plains of the Punjab to the point where the borders of many independent countries meet those of the Indian Union.

It is bounded on the north by the Karakoram range, including the Chinese Turkistan and Russian Turkistan, on the east by the high tableland of Tibet, on the west by the North West Frontier and the independent kingdom of Afghanistan. On the southern side lies the Punjab, now divided into East Punjab and West Punjab. The state is thus encircled by Russia, China, India, Pakistan, Tibet and Afghanistan.

Kashmir commands and defends the northernmost frontiers of India and is therefore of great importance to India. The land is kept constantly guarded by high Himalayan ranges with only one opening in the North and that through Gilgit.

Gilgit has therefore rightly been termed the "Gibraltar of India" and used to be called the brightest jewel in the crown of the British empire in India.

It is its great value strategically which always kept

the British authorities in India trying to get the region out of the control of the Dogra Government of the Maharaja and many were the tricks employed diplomatically and politically to draw this important territory directly under British control in its relation to the frontier problem as a whole.

**TWO**

**MAHARAJA  
IN POLITICS**





## **Round Table Conference**

**I**N THE YEAR 1916, Lord Hardinge, the Viceroy of India, called the first Chiefs' Conference, and the Chamber of Princes was formally inaugurated in 1921 by His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught on behalf of His Imperial Majesty the King Emperor of India. His Highness Maharaja Ganga Singh of Bikaner was elected the first Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes and was re-elected Chancellor every year upto 1926.

The following qualifications were prescribed in the Constitution of the Chamber of Princes for membership of States in their own right:—

- (a) The Chamber shall consist of members and representative members. The members of the Chamber shall be:—
  - (i) Rulers of States who enjoyed permanent dynastic salutes of 11 guns or over on 1st January 1920; and
  - (ii) Rulers of States who exercise such full or practically full internal powers as in the opinion of the Viceroy qualify them for admission to the Chamber.
- (b) The Representative members of the Chamber shall be such Rulers of States not qualified for admission under sub-clauses (i) and (ii) above as may be appointed under the Regulation.

His Excellency the Marquiss of Reading, Viceroy of India, made his historic announcement on 31.10.1925 regarding the Indian Round Table Conference. The subsequent history of the non-cooperation by the rulers of the Indian States and by the representatives of the Muslim League with the British Indians in the framing of a federal constitution, with central responsibility and the failure of an honourable settlement between the Crown, British India and the States are too

well-known facts of history to be repeated here.

The opening of the Round Table Conference took place in the Royal Gallery of the House of Lords on Wednesday, the 12th November 1930, with stately splendour. For the first time, the King of England presided over such a Conference and called upon the delegates of the Conference to deal with the tremendous problem of India's future Constitution. There were 86 delegates in all—16 from the Indian States, 57 representing British India and 13 political parties. Rt. Hon'ble J. Ramsay MacDonald, Prime Minister of England, the ruling princes of India and their ministers, sat to the right of the throne and the Secretary of State Hon'ble J. Wedgewood Benn, and the other British delegates sat to the left and the British Indian leaders were seated at the front. In opening the Conference, His Majesty the Emperor said, "It gives me most satisfaction to welcome to the capital of my empire representatives of the Princes, Chiefs and people of India to inaugurate this Conference with my ministers and representatives of other parties composing the Parliament in whose precincts we are assembled". In the end the King said, "May your discussion point the way to ensure achievement of this end and may your names go in history as those of the men who served India, whose endeavour advanced the happiness and prosperity of all my beloved people. I pray that Providence may grant you in a bounteous measure wisdom, patience and goodwill". It was a gorgeous sight to see the King, his Ministers, the delegates from India assembled in the magnificent gallery of the House of Lords.

The speech of His Majesty was followed by that of the Prime Minister of England, Maharaja Sayaji Rao Gaekwad of Baroda, Maharaja Hari Singh of Kashmir and Mr. M. A. Jinnah and others. The Maharaja of Baroda spoke of Queen Victoria's famous proclamation namely, "India's prosperity will be our strength and their contentment our security, in their gratitude our best reward". The best speech on the opening day was that of Mr. M. A. Jinnah who said in a very powerful

and clear tone: "I call upon all the Premiers and representatives of the Dominions who are here to witness the birth of a new dominion of British Commonwealth".

The Congress Party had refused invitation to attend this Conference. After the King left the Royal Gallery, the Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes proposed in a short speech that Mr. MacDonald, the Prime Minister of Great Britain should preside over the Conference. Later on, many Committees were formed but the most important Committee was the Federal Structure Committee of which Lord Sankey, Chancellor of the Exchequer, was elected as President. It is in this Committee that the Indian Princes, the British delegates and the representatives of British India aired their political views.

The Maharaja of Bikaner pointed out in the first meeting of the Federal Structure Committee that:—

- (i) What was desired was an equitable agreement to be reached to govern the relations of the two Indias ensuring for the States their due position in the future Constitution as co-equal partners with British India, guaranteeing their Treaties and Sovereignty, and safeguarding their interests, including those of their subjects on terms just and honourable alike to the States and British India;
- (ii) Such Federation must be subject to certain essential safeguards;
- (iii) The Princes in expressing their willingness to consider entering the Federation were prompted by three important considerations, viz;—
  - (a) Their loyal devotion to their beloved King Emperor and their friendship for the Empire as faithful "Allies and Friends" with a view, even at the risk of some sacrifice, to be of some assistance in the present grave situation in India, provided the Sovereignty and integrity of the States and their Treaties were not imperilled;
  - (b) Their natural desire compatible with

honour and safety, to assist in every reasonable manner their country—becoming a co-equal and honoured Member of the British Commonwealth of Nations and to help their brethren in British India under the aegis of the Crown to rise to their full stature; and

- (c) Because it appeared that in the long run such a Federation was in certain directions also likely to prove of advantage to the Princes and their States and subjects.
- (iv) They could not accept any position of the slightest subordination or inferiority to British India, but desired to share equally and with honour with British India any Sovereignty or Dominion Status which British India may hereafter enjoy;
- (v) The States came into political relations with the Crown through Treaties of "Perpetual Friendship, Alliance and unity of interests" and through Sanads and other Engagements;
- (vi) The States subjects were not British subjects; nor were their territories British territory; and British or—British Indian legislation did not apply to the States;
- (vii) The States in the majority of cases were carved out by the strong arm and sword of their Ancestors; and they were not grants from anyone; and therefore the Princes had to be mindful of what they owe to their Ancestors, who founded their States, and to their Order, and to their subjects and Dynasties; and thus—could not agree to anything which might endanger the future existence of the States, or jeopardise their Sovereignty and internal autonomy or the due rights of their subjects, except what might be agreed voluntarily to be delegated in the common interests for federal purposes;
- (viii) It could never be agreed to that the Princes or their subjects should ever become British

subjects by anything arising or resulting from Federation, or their willingness to make any sacrifices for the purpose;

- (ix) Their personal and dynastic matters—subject again to certain safeguards and the settlement of certain disputes in regard to Paramountcy would remain with the Crown and be dealt with by the Viceroy, and not the Governor-General-in-Council.

## 63 *Impasse over Loin Cloth*

THE SECOND ROUND Table Conference was called in 1931 in which Mahatma Gandhi, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and other eminent leaders, such as Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Rt. Hon'ble Mr. M. R. Jayakar, the Maharajas of Baroda, Bikaner, Patiala and others participated. The speeches of Mahatma Gandhi were listened to most attentively after his short and excited talk with the King of England at a reception at the Buckingham Palace. He made his historic speech when he said with reference to the talk he had with an English gentleman: "My children in India treat British bombs and bullets as mere crackers". Here I would like to narrate how the mention of bombs and crackers was made by Mahatma Gandhi at the Federal Structure Committee. One day all the delegates and advisors from India to the Round Table Conference were invited to the Buckingham Palace by the King of England and Emperor of India for an afternoon reception and there was a lot of fuss with regard to the dress which Mahatma Gandhi should wear while attending the function. In the invitation it was mentioned at the left hand side of the invitation card 'Morning Dress'. The morning dress mentioned in the card meant that the Indian guests should wear national dress, and morning suit or frock coat with top hat was the dress prescribed for the Europeans. Mahatma Gandhi would not attend the reception in any other dress than what the poor Indians wore. There was a grave impasse when Mahatma Gandhi informed the Secretary of State that he would go to the reception only in loin cloth. On the other hand, the King and Queen resented and took objection to Mahatma Gandhi's appearance in such a scanty dress. The Secretary of State for India wired to the Earl of Willingdon, Viceroy of India, for his

advice in the matter. The Viceroy informed the Secretary of State that there would be great resentment in India if Mahatma Gandhi did not attend this reception at the Buckingham Palace due to proper dress. So the King and Queen were forced against their wishes to have Mahatma Gandhi in his usual dress at the reception. I was also invited to this function as a delegate from India and I stood and talked in the portico with Mahatma Gandhi who was dressed in loin cloth with a white shawl over his shoulders and was looking like a prophet. He was accompanied by Mrs. Sarojini Naidu. All the delegates and advisors from India, Royal Princes, Dukes and members of the aristocracy of England with their consorts gorgeously dressed and the Prime Minister and ministers of the Government of Great Britain and officers of the Political Department and high ranking officers of the Army, Navy and the Air Force, were present at this function. The total number of guests on this occasion was not less than 2,000. A few yards from the portico where Mahatma Gandhi was standing, the King and the Queen received their guests inside the magnificent and spacious audience hall at the Buckingham Palace. The guests were presented by Lord Chamberlain to the King and the Queen, announcing their names and the King brought his hand forward and shook the hand of each guest who passed on to the Queen who also shook his hand. Mahatma Gandhi was the last guest to enter the drawing room. I remember that when Mahatma Gandhi entered the room, his name was not announced though the King shook hand with him while the Queen withdrew her hand and Mahatma Gandhi was ushered into the centre of the Hall away from the other guests by an Equerry-in-waiting. It was there that the King met him and had a talk with him which was later narrated to me by Mrs. Sarojini Naidu who was my personal friend of long standing. The eyes of all guests were focussed on the centre where the King and Mahatma Gandhi were standing. The King looked excited and angry. It was a unique and



unforgettable sight to see the King in frock coat with chequered trousers, talking to Mahatma Gandhi in his loin cloth. The King told Mahatma Gandhi, "You were a friend of the British in Africa and I do not understand how now you turned against me and the British Government and I warn you if you create disturbances in India and do not cooperate with my Government I have my army there which will blow up all agitators and conspirators". The Mahatma kept quiet and the King walked away to talk to other guests. Next day the Mahatma made his famous speech at the Federal Structure Committee, mentioned above.

## 64 *Federal Structure*

**T**HE THIRD CONFERENCE was called on 17th November 1932 and it was much smaller than the previous ones. Only 46 delegates attended it and none of the important rulers were present. The opposition Labour Party had also refused to take part in this Conference and the serious gap at the session was the absence of the Congress. For, the Congress had in the meantime launched another campaign of Civil Disobedience. The important decision at the First and Second Round Table Conferences was in regard to the adoption of Federal Legislature but the Third Federal Round Table Conference could not settle the size of the Federal Chambers, the proportion of the British India and States representatives and the allocation of States' seats. It was always felt by the Princes that their relationship with the Paramount Power was not clearly defined and that there was always a danger to their future especially in view of the fact that the transfer of Political Power from British hands to the Indians was in continuous process. His Highness Maharaja Bhupinder Singh of Patiala said, "In fact the British and Indian leaders seem to estimate that British India would absorb or at least have full authority over the Indian States. Such an idea, we of the States and peoples and rulers are bound to oppose with all our strength". The rulers and the British India politicians were at cross purposes as the rulers insisted that their representatives in the Federal Legislature should be nominated by them and not elected by the people as urged by the leaders of the Congress Party. This alone brought about the end of the crucial chapter in the modern history of India. It was not only that there was difference of opinion between the rulers and the delegates from British India about the nomination or election of the representatives of the States but also many

conditions imposed by the rulers caused the breach which could not be repaired. The unreasonable conditions on the part of the rulers closed the discussion on the federal constitution.

The rulers at the Round Table Conference were always playing up to the British leaders and ministers of the British Government as how to checkmate the moves of the British Indian delegates towards the attainment of independence. All sorts of combinations and permutations were concocted before the meetings of the Federal Structure Committee and plans were hatched to oppose the Congress leaders with a view to either fail the Conference or get such concession and high percentage of representation in the Legislature so that they become the virtual rulers of the country and when they failed to achieve their object of getting a large percentage of representation in the Legislature nominated by them, the rulers gradually started looking at the Federation with suspicion and the outlook at the conclusion of the Round Table Conference was not very rosy and some of the rulers began to think that the Conference was doomed to failure.

The Indian States Delegation at a meeting held in Bombay had unanimously agreed to ask for a minimum of 125 seats for the States in the Upper House so as to ensure the individual and equal representation of all the members of Chamber of Princes in their own right, and for 140 seats out of a total of 350 seats on a 40% basis in the Lower House, but important states led by Sir Mirza Ismail, Dewan of Mysore, disagreed with the resolution passed at the meeting by the Indian States Delegation, which was not attended by them.

The medium and smaller States pleaded their cause for equal status with the important States, enjoying 21 gun salutes and urged that the allocation of seats should be on the basis of equal individual representation in the Upper House for all Sovereign States and that the important States should not have plurality of votes as they thought that such an arrangement will

bring about complications and difficulties. The medium and smaller States were convinced that any scheme based on plurality of votes was foredoomed to failure.

Copy of a cablegram dated Gajner, the 21st November 1931 from Lieutenant General His Highness the Maharaja of Bikaner to the Rt. Hon'ble Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, Prime Minister of Great Britain, London is given below:

"In inviting attention to what I said on various occasions in our conversations as well as in my speeches in Sankey Committee in both present and former sessions and to my speech here on fifteenth November and as one earnestly desirous of seeing princes and Indian States take important and their due part in restoration of peaceful conditions and law and order and contentment prevailing in India I venture once again to lay emphasis on essential need and supreme importance of having larger number of seats reserved for States in Upper Federal House for which as previously stated it is my firm conviction that nothing less than one hundred and twentyfive seats will meet legitimate requirements of or give satisfaction to States. Eighty seats Upper House totally inadequate. Indeed eighty seats may well prove a menace to States generally federating. My views further strengthened by conversations with and letters received from several Brother Princes and Ministers since my return to India. Upon this very question of numbers especially in Upper House and adequate representation of States including expressly smaller States together with adequate and reassuring constitutional fiscal and financial safeguards as well as safeguards relating to Federal Court ensuring and guaranteeing continuance sovereignty of States and definitely providing against encroachment by by Federal Executive or Legislature or internal autonomy beyond what may be agreed to be States will I need hardly reiterate exercise very large influence on Princes agreeing to enter Federation and accepting any new Constitution proposed. Federation with even a dozen or two of more important States alone without

majority of smaller States coming in will I take liberty of stating at least somewhat render matter a farce. In circumstances would earnestly beg reconsideration of question by yourself, Lord Sankey, Sir Samuel Hoare and His Majesty's Government. Addressed Prime Minister repeated Lord Sankey and Sir Samuel Hoare and His Highness Bhopal and Sir Manubhai Mehta."

The Joint Select Committee on the Government of India Bill under the Chairmanship of Marquiss of Linlithgow reported that the States representatives in the Council of States or the Upper House were to consist of 156 members from British India and not more than 104 from the federating States. The Lower Chamber or the House of Assembly was to consist of 250 representatives of British India and not more than 125 of the States. This scared the leaders of the Congress and other political parties in India, particularly when the Joint Select Committee were of the view that the States representatives in the Upper and Lower Houses of the Federal Legislature were to be nominated by the rulers and not elected. The Maharaja of Dholpur came out with another dangerous plan—Confederation of States—and he proposed that all the Indian States under the rulers should confederate and then negotiate terms for a coalition Government with the Princes and their representatives and elected representatives of British India. It was with great difficulty that some of my friends in the Indian States and leaders from British India, like Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Rt. Hon'ble Mr. M. R. Jayakar and I were able to wreck that plan. Here are the contents of the letter which I received from Mr. M. R. Jayakar regarding my via media plan which was much appreciated by the leaders of India:

Winter Road,  
Malabar Hill,  
Bombay, 30th March 1932.

My Dear Sardar,

I have received your letter of the 26th.

I am glad to note that your efforts in bringing about peace and easing the conflict between the Princes have been crowned with success and the *via media* suggested by you in London and approved by Sapru and myself has received greater support than previously.

With kindest regards,

Yours sincerely,

M. R. Jayakar.

His Excellency  
Sardar Jarmanidass,  
Kapurthala.

The Princes at the Round Table Conference and upto 1947 till their States were integrated with the Union of India were playing a hide and seek game with the political leaders of our country and though they went to England for the first, second and third Round Table Conferences and had joined discussions at the Conferences and Committees, none of them excepting Maharaja Sayaji Rao Gaekwad of Baroda and some ministers of the States were seriously inclined to evolve a solution of the difficult problem. The rulers with the help of the British officials wanted to wreck any scheme which will bring independence to India. This was the usual talk in their private circles. Some rulers called Mahatma "Maha Tuma" (most greedy). Maharaja Madhava Rao Scindia of Gwalior had the mania of removing Gandhi caps from the heads of Congressmen gathered at the Gwalior railway station to catch trains. He was happy if he snatched one hundred caps a day. This I saw with my own eyes when I was going to Bombay with Maharaja Jagatjit Singh of Kapurthala and the train stopped at Gwalior railway station where Maharaja Madhava Rao came to meet us. The Maharaja's and his Aides-de-Camp's hands were full of Gandhi caps.

Mahatma Gandhi was not much liked by the British politicians, particularly by the officials in the India Office. I was sitting one morning on a sofa in the gallery of St. James' Palace where the meetings of the

Federal Structure Committee were held and was talking to Mr. P. Patrick, Secretary of State for India when suddenly Mahatma Gandhi passed by us to attend a meeting of the Federal Structure Committee. I stood up and bowed to him and Mr. Patrick remained sitting and told me afterwards that Mahatma Gandhi was self-centred man and was very egoistic but I differed with his opinion about Mahatma Gandhi and explained to him that Mahatma Gandhi was quite a different and a venerable personality, with which he disagreed. I told him that as Mahatma Gandhi did not talk much, he gave a wrong impression about himself. Another time, I was sitting on the same sofa with Mr. M. A. Jinnah. He was in most dejected mood and never cared for the Federation nor he considered Congress leaders as his friends. He told me that under the leadership of the then Congress leaders, it was not possible for him to find out any formula by which the Congress, Muslim League and other parties could get together. I differed with him and told him that we should try to find out a via media. Then he retorted that, "If I were to deal with people like you, Jarmani, I would be able to come to some arrangement about the future of the country but when I am dealing with men like Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel I have no chances of finding a common political formula."

When it was decided that the British Government will transfer power to the leaders of the Congress Party on the 15th August 1947, the princes of India were thunder-struck and used all foul methods to avoid integration of their States. It is my definite opinion that the ruling princes did not make any sacrifice for the independence of India. Fear of annihilation and the remembrance of the history of the Tzar of Russia, Emperor Louis XVI of France and the popular movement in the States drove them to integrate their States with India. Nearly all the States with 21 gun salutes revolted against integration. The Maharaja of Travancore resisted and the Maharaja of Baroda wrote in his own hand to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Home Minister of

the Government of India, on 2nd November 1947 that unless he was made King of Gujarat and the Government of India accepted his terms, he would not co-operate with them and would not help to subdue the revolt by the Nawab of Junagadh. It was at that time that the Government of India de-recognised Maharaja Pratap Singh and his son Fateh Singh was recognised as Maharaja of Baroda. This strong action taken by the Government of India made the rulers behave like subdued patriots and the Union which they had formed to undo the merger of the States was dissolved and this action by the Government of India served as a constant reminder to the erring princes. Gradually the princes thought that they had no chance but to decide to stay with the Government of India and seek their protection. They began to think that they would be better safeguarded by the Government of India than if they remained rulers and had to depend on the will of the people who were not friendly to them. Before I proceed further, I would mention here that the Maharaja of Travancore had even agreed to send a trade representation to Pakistan and had even declared on the 11th of June to have an independent sovereign State. Travancore and Baroda are not the only States that had revolted but also His Highness the Maharaja of Jodhpur and most of the small states were watching what would happen to the big rulers before they took any action. The Maharaja of Kashmir, Hari Singh, took long time to decide whether he should merge with India or with Pakistan or remain independent. But when the raiders were threatening his life and had invaded Srinagar, then only he asked the Government of India to come to his rescue. It is only the spontaneous help from the Government of India that saved the situation. The Maharaja of Mayurbhanj was always avoiding to merge as he was pretending that he had a responsible Government and could not move without consulting his ministers. Ultimately out of fear of annihilation, he signed the Instrument of Accession on the 9th of November 1948. Deccan and Gujarat



states also gave a lot of trouble. So did the Maharaja of Indore. Invasion of Hyderabad by the Indian Army is too well known to be repeated. The ruler of Junagadh's accession was also not voluntary. Now coming to the Nawab of Bhopal, from the very beginning he was putting obstacles in the march of freedom of the country, particularly when he was elected as the Chancellor in 1943. He was always trying to create a third force. The Nawab of Bhopal started taking vigorous steps with the Political Department to safeguard the position of the States in any future constitutional set up. At a meeting of the Standing Committee, held on 18th September 1944, the Chancellor gave notice of his intention to move the following resolution at the session of the Chamber to be held early in December:

"The Chamber of Princes considers it necessary to reiterate in the most unequivocal and emphatic terms that the Crown's relationship with the States and the Crown's power in respect of the States cannot and should not be transferred to any third party or other authority without the consent of the States concerned. The Chamber requests His Excellency the Crown Representative to be pleased to convey to His Majesty's Government the grave misgivings and apprehensions aroused in the States by the recent tendency to alter the States' relationship with the Crown and to qualify the observance of the Crown's obligations by unilateral action without the consent of the States, notwithstanding the solemn royal pronouncements that these Treaty Rights shall be maintained unimpaired by the recent assurance conveyed to the Indian princes by His Majesty's Government that the fulfilment of the fundamental obligations arising out of their treaties and Sanads remains an integral part of His Majesty's Government's policy."

He expressed his belief that it could never have been the desire of His Majesty's Government to leave the States as a sort of "No man's land, we fought and sacrificed to win power and we mean to hold it but

if the Congress wants to rob us and let us down we would fight". In fact, nearly all the States had planned to revolt and declare themselves as independent States if the situation was not handled by the strong man of India Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel whom Lord Mountbatten referred to as 'Walnut'—a very hard crust outside but soft pulp once the crust is cracked. His Secretaries, particularly Mr. V. P. Menon and M. V. Shankar, tactfully carried out his policy of bringing the rulers and the States under Indian sovereignty. Otherwise there would have been about 600 Ulsters in India.

It is a matter of pride that today for the first time in our history, the writ of a single Central Government runs from the Himalayas to Kanyakumari.

## 65 *Salutes and Honours*

**T**HE BRITISH GOVERNMENT devised many tricky and tempting schemes to keep the ruling princes of India under their thumb. The most ingenious schemes were gun salutes, conferment of honours and decorations, non-interference in the administration of the States and giving free hand to the rulers to dabble in the finances of the States. The rulers ruled without the sanction of the subjects, passed life and death sentences in accordance with their whims and helped themselves to the State revenue. Unlimited power was given to the ruling princes in the beginning of the 20th century to administer their States, as they willed. Some Maharajas began to act like Louis XIV, Emperor of France, and copied him by proclaiming "L'etat C' est Moi" (I am the State). I heard many times Maharaja Jagatjit Singh of Kapurthala saying in Paris during his conversation with the Ministers of the French Government and the members of the Parisian aristocracy that the State belonged to him and that he was the absolute monarch of Kapurthala Kingdom. The rulers enjoyed sovereign rights, prerogatives and privileges which were guaranteed by the Crown of England under solemn treaties. The Crown was obliged to keep them inviolate and inviolable. The Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes openly said in a public speech, "there was no authority which could at any time encroach upon them or question their validity".

Queen Victoria, Queen of England, and Empress of India proclaimed in 1861 that the rulers should enjoy salutes in guns, political and personal. The salutes were ranging between 9 and 21. The Imperial Head, i.e., the King and Queen of England, were given 101 salutes when the sovereign was present in person and the royal salute was of 31 guns fired on the anniversaries of the birth, accession and coronation of the

reigning sovereign; birthday of the consort of the reigning sovereign, birthday of the Queen Mother and proclamation day. The Maharajas who enjoyed 21 gun salutes were the Nizam of Hyderabad, the Maharajas of Mysore, Baroda, Kashmir, Travancore and Gwalior. The Maharaja of Indore enjoyed 19 gun salutes but within his territory he could fire 21 guns. The same was the case with the Maharajas of Udaipur and Jaipur. Then there were 17 gun salutes for the Maharajas of Jodhpur, Bharatpur, Bikaner, Kotah, Tonk, Bundi, Karauli and Patiala. There were many 15 guns salute rulers including the Maharajas of Alwar, Jodhpur, Datia, Kapurthala and Nabha. The Nawab of Jaora had 13 gun salutes. Then there were several dozens of rulers who enjoyed 13, 11 and 9 guns. Besides the rulers who enjoyed salutes in guns, there were over 200 non-salute States.

Salutes were fired when the ruler visited the Viceroy officially or in their own States on their birthdays, birth of an heir-apparent and on the occasion of the official Darbar. Every time the Viceroy of India visited a State as the guest of the ruler, the Maharaja had to pay him an official visit, though he might be staying in the same Palace where the Maharaja was residing and the Viceroy had to return the visit of the ruler and on both these occasions guns were fired — 31 guns for the visit of the Viceroy and 21, 19, 15, 11 and 9 for the visit of the ruler, according to his political status. The salutes gave special status to the rulers and the warrant of precedence was arranged accordingly, though in many cases it was also altered by the whim of the Viceroy. The rulers with 21 gun salutes had special privileges and the ruler's status continued to be less privileged in accordance with the scale of salutes. A ruler enjoying 21 guns would receive the Viceroy of India at the door of the drawing room of his Palace when he was paying a visit to the State, while rulers of 11 gun salutes met the Viceroy at the porch and received him as soon as he alighted from his car or royal carriage. This distinction was apparent in almost all the ceremonies which

the Viceroy attended. The rulers with nine gun salutes had to go several miles out to receive the Viceroy or his representative, while the rulers with lesser number of salutes met the Viceroy at the boundary to their States' territory and escorted him to his Palace. Some distinction was laid down with regard to the Guard of Honour and spreading of red carpets at the railway stations and the arrival and departure of the rulers. Further the salutes made a difference with regard to the sitting arrangements of the rulers at the official Darbars and State banquets, both at the Viceroy's house and in their own States.

I remember that there was serious trouble when the ruling princes of India entertained the Earl of Willingdon and the Countess at a banquet given at the Hotel Imperial, New Delhi, on 18th April, 1936. I was put in charge of the arrangements for this banquet by His Highness the Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes. After staying at the Hotel Imperial for several weeks before the 14th of April, I made a table plan and it was customary that the table plan should be approved by the Viceroy of India. I arranged the plan in accordance with the warrant of precedence. I had given precedence to Maharaja Bhupinder Singh of Patiala over Maharaja Ganga Singh of Bikaner, though both enjoyed 19 gun salutes. The Maharaja of Patiala was the then Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes. As soon as Maharaja Ganga Singh of Bikaner saw the table plan, he was mad with rage and went straight to the Earl of Willingdon to solve this tangle who called Maharaja Bhupinder Singh and myself. After heated discussions and arguments on both sides and finding that both the Maharajas were adamant, the Viceroy decided that both the rulers should not sit on the main table but should sit at the side tables. The table plan was thus changed to the discontentment and disappointment of both the rulers. My relations with the Maharaja of Bikaner got estranged on account of this incident while the Chancellor applauded my action. The terrific struggle of the rulers for increasing number

of their gun salutes was continuous and on account of this the Viceroy and the political officers had an edge over them. Whenever a ruler pleased the officers of the Political Department by entertainment, receptions or greasing their palms, salutes were raised. Sometimes when the political officers found that it would upset the whole cadre of the rulers by raising the salutes of a State they favoured their favourite rulers with some personal salutes which meant that the personal salutes were for his person only and not for the dynasty or the State which continued to be in the same category of States, as before.

The salutes which glorified the rulers and of which they were most proud became sharp thorns and Bete Noir and wrecked the Round Table Conference and the Structure of the Federal Legislature.

The medium and small States began to curse them as five important States enjoying 21 gun salutes asked for plural representation in the Federal Structure Legislature. The rulers enjoying lesser number of salutes vehemently protested against giving the important States more favourable position in the Legislature, than they would have as sovereigns and they argued that the test of salutes was unsatisfactory.

In the Minutes, the Maharaja of Bikaner stated on the question of representation of the Indian States in the All India Federal Legislature:

## **SALUTES**

Even though salutes serve as a somewhat useful guide, that is, only in certain directions; and there are glaring and unqualified officially admitted anomalies in Salutes. This point was therefore elucidated by me in the Sankey Committee on the 24th September, 1931 (vide page 130, Federal Structure Committee Proceedings, 1931), and I think it would suffice for the purpose if I gave the following extract from my speech in this connection:

“I have been repeatedly and expressly asked by

a large number of States to make it clear on all occasions that salutes alone should not, and cannot, be taken as one of the essential tests qualifying for individual entry into the Federal Legislature. May I here quote two brief extracts from an official speech made by a former Viceroy, Lord Chelmsford? Speaking on the identical question of qualifying tests for Membership of the Chamber of Princes, then about to be inaugurated, and when the constitution of the body was under consideration, Lord Chelmsford stated on the 20th January 1919, in the Princes' Conference, which was held previous to the establishment of the Chamber of Princes, that Mr. Montague, the then Secretary of State for India, and he were of the opinion that—I quote his own words: ‘the whole question of salutes needed most careful investigation *in view of the anomalies which appear to exist, and we held, therefore, that it would be unwise to base the salute list, as it stands, any fundamental distinctions between the more important State and the remainder*’.

Again, at the next Princes' Conference on the 3rd November, 1919, the Viceroy referred to the same question in the following words:—“Your Highnesses will remember that in my last speech I said that Mr. Montague and I felt that the whole question of salutes needed most careful investigation in view of the anomalies which appeared to exist. If the principle I now advocate is to be adopted as the basis of classification, it will be additionally desirable that this investigation should be undertaken at an early date, in order that anomalies whether already existing, or likely to ensue, from the institution of the dividing line, should be corrected wherever possible. My Government are ready to give their earnest consideration to this matter, and will make the necessary recommendations to the

Secretary of State for submission to His Imperial Majesty in due course."

But unfortunately nothing was done. Not only was nothing done, but the salutes—anomalous and arbitrary as they were—were made still more so by "promotions" given in the past half century or so; and after the war, instead of their being removed, such anomalies were further perpetuated and accentuated through—it has regretfully to be said—the lack of imagination and the blundering of the officers of the Government responsible at the time for dealing with such matters. What was intended to be an ingenious solution, to their mind, of certain difficulties was solved to the satisfaction of such officials by the strange institution of a new kind of salute which applied scarcely to some one or two States before—and that only under very especial circumstances. That was the 'Personal' salute which the States were told was a new and great Honour conferred upon them, and which could be fired in honour of the rulers everywhere and also in their own States' territories, whereas in their States, for centuries past, several States have been firing as many as 101 guns for their sovereign rulers, not only on their accessions, but every year on occasions, such as birthdays, etc. Thus many States are still in the possession of their former permanent anomalous salutes while a few States in the higher, and many in the various lower grades of salutes received dynastic promotion.

I must not be considered as saying one word against Imperial honours and favours. They are, it need hardly be added, valued greatly as coming from our beloved King Emperor. But we know that in such matters His Imperial Majesty has, as a constitutional sovereign, to act on the recommendations of the Government of India and of the India Office."

An aide memoire was circulated by Maharaja



Jagatjit Singh of Kapurthala amongst the British officials which showed how from 1915 onwards the rulers, who enjoyed lower number of salutes, were fighting for their rights.

The craze for special seats in Durbars and banquet tables was not confined only to the rulers but this craze also spread to the ministers and officials of the States who were always looking up to their Maharajas for their status in the Warrant of Precedence. If the Ministers and the officials, who were not given seats in the Durbar in accordance with their claims, refused to attend the Durbar on the score, they were degraded. I remember there was a tussle between the two officials of Kapurthala State—Mr. Abdul Hamid who afterwards became Sir Abdul Hamid, Chief Minister of the State and Dewan Sureshar Dass who became Chief Justice later on. He was given seat below Abdul Hamid and he resented this and refused to attend the Durbar. The Maharaja became furious and degraded him by two seats in the next Durbar, though later on the Maharaja realised his mistake and upgraded him and appointed him first as Home Minister and then the Chief Justice of the State.

## *DECORATIONS AND HONOURS*

I was nominated as a delegate to the Round Table Conference by the Rt. Hon'ble Mr. J. Wedgewood Benn, Secretary of State for India, on the recommendation of the Chamber of Princes. Maharaja Jagatjit Singh of Kapurthala asked me to use my influence in London with the King of England, the Secretary of State, Lord Chamberlain, Sir Clive Wigram, the Private Secretary to the King and His Highness the Aga Khan so that the King would graciously confer upon him the decoration of G.C.V.O. (Grand Cross of the Victorian Order). I knew Sir Clive Wigram and His Highness the Aga Khan quite well and worked through them to get the request of the Maharaja conveyed to His Imperial Majesty. The Maharaja of Kapurthala had approached

the Viceroy of India with the similar request but the Viceroy had not acquiesced to the request of the Maharaja on the excuse that if he recommended his case to the Emperor, he would be forced to recommend many other princes for the similar honour. Most of my time at the Round Table Conference was taken up to tackle the officials and the Aga Khan to fulfil the mission given to me by the Maharaja of Kapurthala in securing for him G.C.V.O. The Maharaja had already been decorated by the Emperor of India with G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E. and G.B.E., i.e. Grand Cross of the Star of India, Grand Cross of the Indian Empire and Grand Cross of the British Empire, the highest honours offered to a ruling Prince. Here is the true copy of the personal letter and the Memorandum dated the 14th November 1930 which I received from Maharaja Jagatjit Singh of Kapurthala in this connection:—

**COPY OF LETTER FROM  
MAHARAJA JAGATJIT SINGH OF KAPURTHALA**

Kapurthala,  
November 14th, 1930.

Minister-in-Waiting,

I am very pleased to see by your letter that you have been recognised as Adviser by the British Government and also had the honour of being received by their Majesties.

As regards the G.C.V.O. there is a slight hitch and the matter stands thus.

The Viceroy does not wish to say anything definite and although he seems inclined to support, but cannot quite make up his mind. Sir Charles Watson told me, in confidence, that one of the reasons against it, was that if an honour were given when asked for, as in my case, other princes would know about it and similar requests will be received from many sides which will be embarrassing for the Government. I said that my case was quite an exceptional one and deserved special consi-

deration after my excellent rule of 40 years, which he acknowledged to be true. However, there the matter stands and the Viceroy may or may not recommend, in view of this hitch of the Political Department, although he was most courteous and charming to me during my 2 days stay in Delhi and said he will consider the matter again.

The only possible solution of this would be that a wish may come from His Majesty which will immediately settle the matter and the Political Department can then have no objection, but bureaucracy as you know, never condescends to show any special consideration.

If you think it is possible, in any way, by speaking to Wigram or Sir Godfrey Fawcett, of course very discreetly, and cautiously conveying His Majesty's pleasure to the Viceroy, that will settle the matter immediately. This is of course difficult but possible.

You might show this letter privately to H. H. the Aga Khan and ask also, in what way in his opinion, we can now achieve success in view of the difficulty explained and if he could at all approach some people in the court about it.

I have just got your cable that you have attended the opening of the Conference and the Prime Minister's Banquet, which has given me much satisfaction.

I hope you are keeping good health.

Jagatjit Singh M.

**COPY OF MEMORANDUM DATED THE 14TH  
NOVEMBER 1930, FROM HIS HIGHNESS  
MAHARAJA JAGATJIT SINGH OF  
KAPURTHALA**

I succeeded my father in 1872 as the Maharaja of Kapurthala and since I was entrusted with full ruling powers, I have been serving the cause of the British Empire most earnestly. In the time of need I have never faltered in placing all the resources of my State at the disposal of the British Government. My services

to the Empire have been mentioned in speeches and official documents by the successive Viceroys and Secretaries of State for India, in recognition of which the orders of G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E. and C.B.E. have been conferred upon me.

I am the doyen of the ruling princes of the Punjab and my record of service to the Empire for the last 40 years is well known both in England and in India.

The Kapurthala State troops fought in several theatres of war and were mentioned in despatches several times. The late Field Marshal Lord Rawlinson and Field Marshal Sir William Birdwood, Commander-in-Chief in India, made official acknowledgement of the services of my troops in several operations in Afghanistan and afterwards in the Great War, the field of operations being in East Africa and Mesopotamia and one of my sons took active part in the fighting in France. My troops have also been engaged in quelling local disturbances in India.

I represented India at Geneva at three sessions of the League of Nations and my work there was highly appreciated by the British Government.

I have the honour of having been received by the late Her Majesty Queen Victoria, having the unique privilege of being the guest of Her Majesty at Windsor Castle on three occasions. His Majesty King Edward held me in great esteem and the present King Emperor is assured, if ever assurance was needed, of my staunch devotion and loyalty to his House and the Empire.

I also had the honour of receiving His Royal Highness Prince of Wales in Kapurthala during his last visit to India.

Now my ardent wish is that His Majesty the King Emperor may graciously bestow upon me the decoration of G.C.V.O., particularly as this exalted order is connected with the esteemed name of Queen Victoria and is the emblem of the personal favour of the sovereign to whom I, my State and my people are strongly devoted and attached. My desire to possess this order is further enhanced by the fact that the order is pos-

sessed by several of my brother princes much younger than I and whose record of services to the Empire is not greater than mine in any respect.

—Maharaja of Kapurthala

The rulers vied with each other in canvassing for honours and decorations from the King Emperor and used all means to secure them and thus the Political Department and the Viceroy of India played havoc with the whims and idiosyncrasies of the rulers.

I have in some other chapter given an account of the jealousies of Mirs of Hunza and Nagar who submitted representations to the Viceroy of India that they were not honoured adequately. One ruler accused the other for receiving undue favour on the conferment of an honour from the Viceroy. The dispute arose as one ruler got K.B.E. and the other got K.C.I.E. and how the position was brought to a peaceful end by the sagacious Governor of Gilgit, Pandit Ram Rattan, is narrated in that chapter.

Some of the rulers got the insignia made in diamonds, costing hundreds of thousands of rupees, and others who had no decorations found an ingenious way to decorate themselves. I remember that the Raja Sahib of Suket who had no decoration pleased himself by putting a small clock made of diamonds in front of his gold-ribboned turban with an aigrette. Though it amused everyone who saw him with the clock but he was quite satisfied with this regalia. Whenever I saw him, I was happy to find the exact time from the brilliant and illuminating clock on his turban.

Many plans were hatched how to please the King Emperor, the Viceroy and the Political Agents by the rulers. They are too numerous to narrate here how the rulers surrendered their dignity and self-respect in pursuit of gaining an increase in their salutes and receiving decorations and special privileges.

It is very interesting to mention here that a great ruler like Maharaja Madhava Rao of Gwalior had to name his son and daughter after the names of the King

and Queen of England. Maharaja Madhava Rao was full of jokes and humour and he used to celebrate the April-Fool every year. He got manufactured an imitation railway line of 100 metres in silver and this line was laid on the banquet table in the dining hall of his palace. This table was long enough to lay covers for 200 guests. On this line a miniature train in silver was installed which went up to the kitchen nearby from where food-stuff of all sorts and alcoholic drinks were loaded on it. The Maharaja sat at one end of the table from where he manoeuvred the train. He could stop it by special brakes wherever he liked to unload the food-stuff for the guests. When he wanted the engine to whistle, he just pressed the button from his own seat and the engine whistled. The train was running smoothly most of the time and the Maharaja was happy to entertain his guests but when King George V and the Queen of England went to Gwalior as the guests of the Maharaja on an official visit, the same train was used to bring food-stuffs and drinks from the kitchen to their Imperial Majesties and other guests. Unfortunately, on that particular night of the banquet, the train got derailed in front of the King and the food-stuff and drinks in the train fell into the lap of the King who was attired in his official full dress with medals and decorations. He got enraged at this accident and took it to be a personal insult. The Maharaja was forgiven after he gave the names of George and Mary to his two children, though the Maharaja meant no discourtesy to the King and the Queen as he was entertaining them with this novel invention.

However, some of the rulers of Rajasthan, like Maharaja Fateh Singh of Udaipur, struggled against the British domination. He was orthodox and wished to conserve the old Rajput dignity, and therefore he never surrendered to the dictates of the British Government. To get him on his side, the King of England conferred on him the exalted order of the great Commander of the Star of India—the highest honour that the British Government could bestow on any ruler in India.

When the British Resident approached the Maharaja and offered him this honour, which consisted of Sash and Star in precious stones, the Maharaja told the Resident that the honour bestowed upon him by the King Emperor resembled that of the cordon (sash) used by his chaprassis (peons) and said that he will not be happy that the King of England should class him like a chaprassi, but on the intervention of his son, Bhupal Singh, he accepted the honour but later he put the sash and the star round the neck of his favourite horse.

Before I conclude this chapter regarding honours and salutes, I would like to mention that much of my time in London, whenever I was sent there on political missions by the rulers, was spent in the India Office or the office of Sir Clive Wigram, whom I had to request on behalf of the rulers to grant them special invitations for the races in the Royal Box at Ascot or the Wimbledon World Tennis Championship in the royal enclosure. It is well known that Ascot races are most exciting and fashionable and whoever was invited to the Box of the King and the Queen was also invited to lunch with Their Majesties. The rulers felt that it was a great honour to be invited to Ascot and lunch with Their Majesties and I had to plead the cause of the princes to Sir Clive Wigram and normally he agreed to the requests of the Maharajas and got the consent of the King to invite them to the Royal Box at Ascot and Wimbledon. Then again my time was taken to ask Sir Clive Wigram and the Lord Chamberlain to issue invitations to the rulers for lunches and other functions at the Buckingham Palace to which they were not entitled, in accordance with the protocol rules. They were officially invited to lunches and dinners at the Buckingham Palace on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee of the King and similar occasions. Lunching with the Prime Minister of England was also much sought for and the Maharajas were quite amazed when the Prime Minister of England, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald invited me to a private lunch at 10 Downing Street.

*THREE*

END OF AN EPOCH





## ***Historico-Political Canvas***

### ***HISTORY BEGINS WITH ANOMALIES***

India before independence was studded with about 600 States, ruled directly by the Maharajas, Nawabs, Rajas or Chiefs—states as big as England or France or as small as 'Thumb Nail Kingdoms' and 'Pigmies in Area' of less than 1 sq. mile, big and small, advanced and archaic, some with a hoary past and most of them newly created by the British to reward those who helped them against the Indians. To these princely states, which covered two-fifths of the total area of India and 28% of India's total population after the partition, the law of Indian Legislature did not apply. Their rulers were free to rule their subjects as they liked, with the result that a few of them had gone far ahead with the experiment in democracy while good many never knew what a municipal committee was. Some of them had their own railway systems, while a large number could not claim to have even five miles of an ordinary macadamized road. In some of them, modern amenities of life were available at ridiculously cheap price, while many had known no hospital or even an outdoor dispensary. Although these States, world's strangest anachronisms, have now disappeared, a peep into their history and their funny existence is full of interest. There were, however, only forty States which had actual treaties with the British Government. The rest, 500 of them, owed their existence to sanads or grants from the Paramount Power.

Still more interesting was the difference in their status, titles, privileges and salutes to which they were entitled. While the Nizam of Hyderabad enjoyed the privileged position of 'His Exalted Highness' there were others who were only 'Rajas,' 'Raos,' and 'Chiefs.'

The ladder of distinction had many rungs. For instance, there were eight States which had their own

money mint, and six had their own postal systems; on the other hand there were 286 of 'petty States' of Kathiawar which were grouped under petty Police Post Areas and the administration was carried on by officers appointed by the local representatives of the British Government.

Striking contrasts existed in matters of internal development of each State from the Himalayan Highlands to the Southernmost sea board. There were States of Mysore, Travancore, Cochin and Baroda, which to a certain extent had some form of a representative Government, a higher standard of literacy and social progress than even British India, and had comparatively modern and efficient administration. But, on the northwest frontiers of India, there were States like Hunza and Nagar, where the revenues were paid in kind and as Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, as President of the Indian States Peoples' Conference, had remarked in early days, "they still live in the State of barter economy." It was due to this diversity that even the British had always made a differentiation between the three categories of the States.

In the first were 108 States that were members of the Chamber of Princes in their own right. In the second were 127 States which were represented in the Chamber of Princes by 12 nominees. The third category was of the 'Jagirs' and the estates numbering 327. But beneath the surface of this diversity there was a common thread, as the Simon Commission for Reforms report observed, "one feature is common to all, they are not British territory and their subjects are not British subjects."

It was asserted by the princes and the British Government that the relationship between the princes and British Government was through the Crown and hence all dealings with the Viceroy were as the Representative of the Crown and not as the Governor General and Head of the Indian Administrative set up. This theory was to play a considerable part later in the constitutional development vis-a-vis the Indian princes.

Spluttered all over India were these princely pre-

serves. Among these the largest continuous area was of Rajasthan, but that was composed of a number of them, Alwar, Bikaner, Bundi, Jaipur, Kotah, Tonk, Jodhpur and Udaipur being the more important ones. Further to the east was Gwalior, with a population of 3 millions. In Central Indian Agency were Bhopal, Indore, Orcha and Rewa and some others, while to the south-east of Rajputana and bordering on the coast lay the extremely heterogeneous array of numerous Kathiawar States. Also known as the Western Agency, better known among them were Bhavanagar, Cutch, Junagudh and Navanagar. In the north were Kashmir and Simla States Agency, and the Phulkian States of Patiala, Kapurthala, Nabha, Faridkot, and Jind. Then there were Malerkotla, Bahawalpur and Kalsia, while in the east were the Khasi and Assam States along with the Orissa Agency. In the south were Hyderabad, Mysore, Baroda, Travancore, Cochin and Kolhapur. Thus, it was not possible to travel from Delhi to Bombay without traversing the States' territory at least 30 times if not more.

The circumstances of their birth also were as diverse as their size and structure. Their history is even more eloquent than their geography. The historian is constantly baffled by claims and counterclaims by hundreds of princely houses each claiming to be the most ancient and the most noble. Most of the princes and their satellites did not only uphold their Divine Right to misrule, but also claimed a Divine ancestry. Most of them maintained that they were the direct descendants of Gods, but all, without exception, spoke of their ancient and noble lineage. Myth lent support to make the fossils and phantoms of bygone ages look real and alive.

So let us begin with the biggest of them.

## *HYDERABAD*

It was founded by Mir Kamr-ud-Din Ali Khan, better known by his title Asaf Jah, originally conferred by the Mughal Emperor. His father Ghazi-ud-Din Khan was a General in the Army of Aurangzeb, and traced his origin in the usual way to the Caliph Abu Bakar,

the father-in-law of the Prophet.

His son was first made the Governor of the Deccan dominions by the Emperor in 1712. But not twelve years had passed that he declared himself independent in 1724. In 1748 he died and the fight for succession began, typical of the acquisition diplomacy of those days. The French and the British both had their candidates. The French candidate won and the British plans failed. But he soon made up for the British disappointment by joining hands with them against the great Tipu Sultan, the King of Mysore, who had launched a liberation crusade against the British. In 1800 the finale came with his capstone to treachery, when he became the first subsidiary ally and signed the first treaty of its kind. According to it, the usual autonomy in internal affairs was granted, leaving the active handling of affairs to the British. Apart from it, a provision was made for maintaining a contingent of the British force in the State. To defray the expenses, the Province of Berar was ceded to the British as a security. The rest is the common tale of surrender and obedience to the foreign rulers, tyranny and torture of the poor and the voiceless subjects.

## MYSORE

Mysore was an important state in Southern India whose present dynasty dates from 1399 A.D. when two brothers Vijayaraj and Krishnaraj came to Mysore and established a rule which commencing with few villagers comprised the Mysore State. Mysore has an area of 29,475 sq. miles. This is almost equal to the size of Scotland and more than twice of Belgium.

In the reign of Chikka Krishnaraja Wadiyar from 1734-65, Haider Ali usurped the kingdom of Mysore but on the fall of his son and successor Tipu Sultan, the dynasty was restored under another Krishnaraj Wadiyar. The British Government found an excuse of the rebellion by the people and assumed the direct rule of the State in 1831. The State was, however, restored to Maharaja Chandrarajendra Wadiyar in 1881. The

instrument of transfer which formerly regulated the relation between the State and the Paramount Power was replaced by a treaty which was ratified by the Viceroy on 1st December 1931, but the important article 18 of the treaty was afterwards abrogated. Mysore had a longer tradition of progressive government than any other State in India. In the reign of His Highness Maharaja Krishanarajendra Wadiyar and His Highness Maharaja Jaya Chama Raja Wadiyar, a separate privy purse for the rulers was fixed and the system of government in Mysore was constitutional with well-defined legislative, executive and judicial powers and responsibilities.

### BARODA

Baroda was ruled by the Gaekwad family, which first rose into prominence in 1720-21 when Danaji Rao Gaekwad, a Marhatta Chief was appointed by the ruler of Satara to the post of his Second Commander-in-Chief, with the title of "Shamsher Bahadur" the supreme swordsman. His nephew Balaji Rao replaced him as his successor and laid the foundation of the State. The usual conspiracy and intrigue played its part, and brought the State into conflict with the neighbouring States. After this prologue the scene opened in 1772 with the signing of a defensive and offensive treaty with the British. This more or less reciprocal arrangement was followed by further subordinate treaties in 1802, 1807 and 1815. Apart from other clauses, the maintenance of a British Contingent was provided for, and a territory yielding Rs. 11,70,00 of revenue was ceded by the Gaekwad Darbar, and the relations between the Gaekwad and the Peshwa, the head of the Marhatta confederacy, were served.

### TRAVANCORE

Travancore was the most southern of the Indian States with a population of half a million and an area of about 8,000 sq. miles. The rulers of the State belonged to a Kshatriya family whose descent is traced from

the ancient Cheru Kings of South India. The Maharaja of Travancore was the ally of the British during the wars with the Maharajas of Mysore and in 1795 entered into an alliance with the British Government receiving a guarantee of protection.

The Maharajas of Travancore treated the revenue of the State as public funds, appropriating to their own use only a certain amount which was fixed by his Government and mentioned in annual budget of the State. Unlike other states women had equal franchise with men and were eligible for membership in the two chambers called Sri Mulam Assembly and the Sri Chitra State Council.

### **BIKANER**

Bikaner was an important state in Rajputana, now called Rajasthan, the land of Princes and Legends. The State of Bikaner was founded by a Rathor Prince Rai Sikhji, a son of Rai Jodhaji, founder of Jodhpur. Up to the 16th century, the rulers, the Rathors, went on consolidating and expanding their territorial acquisitions. Rai Singh (Circa 1573-1631) became a vassal of the Mughal empire in the reign of the Mughal Emperor, Akbar the Great. Surat Singh concluded a subsidiary alliance in 1818 with the British Government which was subsequently modified in 1887.

### **BHOPAL**

It was the principal Muslim State in Central India and ranked only second in importance among the Muslim States of India, Hyderabad being the first. The dynasty was founded by Dost Mohammad, an Afghan who came to India in 1708, in Bahadur Shah's reign, in search for employment. In 1709 he obtained a lease of Berasia Pargana in Malwa. Subsequently, he was made Governor of the area and took the advantage of chaos and established his independent authority in Bhopal. In 1817, at the commencement of the Pindari War, the British Government made an alliance with Nazar Mohammed, the then ruler, and in 1818, he was drawn into

the usual pattern of subordination.

### *JAIPUR*

Jaipur was one of the oldest Rajput States and claimed its origin from the Solar Dynasty, going back to Kush, a son of Lord Rama. And the ruler of the State was the head of Kachawas community of Rajputs. It remained unimportant till the day of Raja Jai Singh, the famous General and brother-in-law of Akbar the Great. Afterwards it always played an important part in Rajputana, but was cowed down by the British in 1818.

### *UDAIPUR*

Udaipur claimed to be the oldest dynasty, uninterruptingly going back to 734 A.D., when it was founded by one Bapa Rawal of the Rajput Gehlathia clan. Among other reasons it was proud of the fact that its rulers never accepted the authority of the Mughal emperors and never gave daughters to them in marriage and were only subdued by the British in the common fatal year of 1818—the year of aggressive integration by the British.

### *JODHPUR*

Jodhpur was another important State in Rajputana, headed by the Rathor Clan and was founded in 1459. After some time the Mughal suzerainty was perforce accepted, to be followed in 1818 by the acceptance of the substantial overlordship of the British.

### *OTHER STATES*

Along with these Rajput States in Rajputana stood that Jat State of Bharatpur which was conceived in the womb of the turmoils of the late 17th and early 18th century. It too concluded a treaty of friendship with the British in 1803. But the ruler was found guilty of making secret overtures to the Marhattas. Thus ensued a fight for survival resulting only in a completely subsidiary treaty in 1805.



In the south stood the Marhatta State of Kolahpur, which was founded by 'Tara Bai', a lady of remarkable courage and wisdom and the wife of Raja Ram I, the younger son of Sivajee, the immortal hero of undying deeds of war and courage.

Conditions in the Punjab were not very much different either. The distintegration of the Mughal empire was followed and to some extent was caused by the Pathan invasions of Ahmed Shah Abdali, and by the rise of Sikhs who had become the most potent force in the area between the rivers Sutlej and Jamuna. Their supremacy was formally acknowledged by the Pathans and in some cases by the Mughals, who made important Sikh Chiefs the Governors of different principalities. They ruled the country under the seal of the suzerain but according to their own sword and sweet will. In the second half of the 18th century, they had gathered a considerable force to declare themselves as an organised political community, holding sway over practically the whole of the Punjab, and over quite a considerable part of the North-Western Frontier Province. They took Lahore, expelled Kabuli Mull, the Governor, appointed by the Pathans, and in 1764 at Amritsar they declared themselves as a political power.

Their Governmental system has mostly been described as a Feudal Theocratic Confederacy. It was a confederacy of twelve clans, called the Misals.

Most important of the Misals was the Phulkian Misal which derived its name from Phul, whose ancestor Bar-yan had received the hereditary rent collectorship of the areas south-west of Delhi from the first Mughal Emperor Babar in 1326. Phul received the confirmation of Babar's installation deed from Emperor Shahajehan. From the eldest son of Phul have descended the families of Nabha and Jind, and from the second son the house of Patiala.

#### **PATIALA**

Proverbial for passion, Patiala took birth in 1751. Ala Singh, on whom Ahmed Shah Abdali had conferred

the Governorship of the areas adjoining Patiala, was the founder and father. He became virtually independent. In 1767, Ahmed Shah came again on his predatory mission and wanting a conciliation, bestowed the title of Maharaja on Amar Singh, the grandson of Ala Singh, Amar Singh was a clever diplomat and a fine soldier. He made an alliance with the Katoch Rajputs and made himself virtually supreme in the areas of Jullundur Doab and the adjoining hills. From 1809 onwards the British became the Supreme Power in that area, by concluding the Ludhiana Treaty with Ranjit Singh, who recognised British supremacy beyond Sutlej, and subsequently withdrew all claims of interference in the area. For meritorious (freedom betraying) services in the mutiny (known to Indian patriots as the War of Independence) a territory yielding 2 lakhs of revenue was made over to the Patiala house in 1858.

### KAPURTHALA

The Ahluwalia Misal laid the foundations of the Kapurthala dynasty. Its ancestor was one Sadha Singh but it was left to Jassa Singh to glorify it by founding the State. He was a contemporary of Nadir Shah and Ahmed Shah and is called the founder of Sikh army coupled with his numerous other contributions to consolidate the Sikh power. Along with other Sikh States the state came under British protection in 1809 and rendered 'worthy' services to the British during the second Sikh war. The ruler at that time was Nihal Singh, who was bestowed with the title of Raja in recognition of his loyalty to the alien British Masters.

During the Revolt of 1857 Raja Randhir Singh assisted the British and was given the jagir of the two confiscated jagirs of Bundi and Bithuli in Oudh.

With this we come to the close of the first part of our narrative. It brings out many an interesting fact.

Firstly, that the Indian princes were the growth of the turbulent and uncertain times and owed their existence largely to the diplomatic considerations of the supreme ruling power of the period.

Secondly, that while their claims of descending from the sun and the moon may be questioned, no one can doubt that they had always been the worshippers of the rising sun. We have seen that even the most ancient of them had a taste for licking the ground under the feet of the strong. Thus they obeyed the Pathans, gave away their daughters to the Mughals, served and licked the shoes of the British and abdicated after India's independence. What will be their next invention in the art of servility is only known to God and princely conscience.

Thirdly, as a shrewd student of the Indian problems has put, to call them 'States' is really a misnomer, as it is a historical nonsense to acknowledge the claim that they ever had regular and organised independent life. A few exceptions apart, claims of almost all of them rested upon the bestowal of authority from the Supreme power of the time.

### **TREATIES BETWEEN STATES AND THE PARAMOUNT POWER**

It will be interesting to know something about the treaties under which their relationship with the Crown was regulated.

With very few exceptions all the treaties were made before the 'mutiny', and most of them were signed at a time when the East India Company's policy was generally that of non-interference in the affairs of States, not directly under their rule. As Lee Warner says, "The keynote of the foreign policy of the Company towards the princes of the country from 1757, when Clive after the victory of Plassey, won on 23rd June, acquired the Zamindari of the district round Calcutta to the close of Lord Minto's rule as Governor General in 1813, was one of non-intervention of limited liability". This was so partly because the Company had definite instructions from home to eschew territorial aggrandisement and partly because they had hoped that mutual jealousies and animosities would be no less fatal to native rulers than British arms. "Beyond the ringfence of the Company's dominion they avoided intercourse with the

Chiefs in the hope that the stronger organisations would absorb the weaker and become settled States."

Such was the policy of the Company at the time when most of the treaties were entered into. It was only natural, therefore, that the non-intervention clause should find a prominent place in all the treaties. It was a matter of policy, dictated by the peculiar needs of the times, that the East India Company abjured all intention of interference in the internal affairs of the States. True, they often refrained from interfering in State matters, but that was only because they were too alive to the danger of multiplication of responsibilities. Yet they did not hesitate to put their hand in, whenever the matter arose. For instance, in matters of Hyderabad, Mysore and Carnatic in the eighties of the 18th century, it was mainly due to the French menace and Dupleix' appearance on the scene. Again in the early years of the 19th century the Company was forced to interfere in the affairs of the Marhatta States in order to suppress the Pindari brigandism. The hordes of these "human wolves" had swept over the whole of Rajputana, Central India and the fertile tracts of the Deccan. It cannot be gainsaid that there also the motive for interference was self-defence or defence of the territories under the direct rule of the East India Company. "The Pindari disturbances," says Lee Warner, "were the occasion, rather than the cause, of the inevitable revolution, which was to shatter the policy of non-intervention and to establish British Supremacy in the heart of the Empire, as it had already under the same stress of self-defence been consolidated in the South". Now, though the qualified autonomy of States was a rule respected, the officers of the Company could not be said to be in doubt as to the future of these principalities. They were far-sighted enough to see that a substantial part of their autonomy would have to be taken away whenever India was advanced enough to be unified.

All this clearly explains why the East India Company, while negotiating alliance with a State, always

preferred to remain unconcerned with its internal affairs, and when a treaty was concluded and reduced to writing, this provision was invariably incorporated in it. The foregoing also serves to explain why on certain occasions the Company interfered with the affairs of certain States, contrary to its accepted policy of "ring-fence" and limited liability.

Pledges, we have seen, were readily given and readily broken and treaties made and violated without any show of scruples. By dwelling on these facts of history, however, it is not intended to show that the East India Company necessarily went back on its undertaking or that its interference, contrary to treaty provisions, was immoral. We are not concerned with the moral aspect of the question here. Nor does legal interpretations of the treaties help or interest us; for loosely drafted and ambiguously worded as most of them are, there is unlimited scope for legal quibbling and interpretation. Thus, while on the one hand the Paramount Power loudly claimed that all the treaties and engagements with Native States have been scrupulously respected, A.P. Nicholson solemnly swears that all those treaties have been shown no better consideration than mere "scraps of paper."

History, in those unsettled days, was a running brook. Event followed event with incredible speed. Years, nay months sometimes, changed the face of a Suba, necessitating re-adjustment of alliances and realignment of forces. Not unoften states changed masters, and masters, in turn, changed their allegiance to another sovereign. No wonder, then, if only within a few years of its making, a treaty sometimes became useless, or not wholly applicable to changed circumstances.

These 150 years witnessed the gradual rise of the British Power in India. The growth of the British influence in this sub-continent had been essentially slow, even if it had been fairly steady. For decades the British were only one of the powers in India or at the utmost *primus inter pares*. It was only after the "mutiny" that they became the Paramount Power in India. Lord

Reading wrote to H.E.H. the Nizam in 1926, "the sovereignty of the British Crown is supreme in India." This all important change in the status of the British Crown in India, as also the political tendencies operating in British India as well as states, must be taken into consideration when interpreting these treaties. This is a factor in the history of treaties, of which all official documents have not only taken cognizance, but which they have gone out of their way to emphasize. They have always warned students and scholars alike against reading the treaties as detached from the historical background that gave birth to them.

Now coming back to the examination of the British policy towards the states, we may keep in view the conditions existing in India in the 18th century. It was a time of trouble for the British power which had not been well established yet. It was due to these reasons that the first phase of British policy towards the states was marked by a desire to remain confined to its settlement and to strengthen the existing position. Thus Clive made the first important treaty with the Nawab Vazir of Oudh in 1765, after the defeat of Suja-ud-Dollah and his allies in the battle of Baxar.

Clive deliberately allowed Oudh to remain as a separate entity, because he wanted to safeguard the domain of Bengal from the grasping wrath of the Mughal power, which still had some real strength behind it. With this in mind he pursued his activities in the other parts of the country as well. Thus he and his successors created a number of petty buffer states in the South and began to protect them through subordinate alliances. So Banaras was created and relations with the States of Bihar and Orissa were regularised. Carnatic was allowed to exist in the South. One of the marked characteristics of the treaties of this period was the assertion of a sort of equality and reciprocity in form, but real subordination in fact. Thus the important clauses of the Oudh treaty, which became a general pattern for the treaties of the time, stipulated:

1. The Nawab agreed to maintain a force for the

protection of his country, as well as for the protection of Bengal.

2. These forces were to be equipped, trained and officered by the British, but expenses had to be paid by the Nawab.
3. Complete autonomy was guaranteed to the Nawab.

The most important tactic of the British was lending big amounts of money to the princes and to encourage them to spend it and then to extract it with coercion in cash or in submission. The trickery was well expressed by a British historian, who calls it the fattening of the oxen.

The second source was provided by the usual court intrigue, and backing up of different claimants to the throne. The case of Hyderabad, we have seen, provides a patent illustration.

This policy of creating a belt of friendly powers should not lead us to conclude that the Britishers recognised the states' autonomy even at that time. Even Cornwallis, who had tasted the bitter fruits of reckless imperialist expansion in America and therefore was very cautious, did not hesitate to consider Oudh a protected area and did not hesitate in interfering in internal matters of Oudh, so much so that it has been ironically remarked that the Resident dictated even the choice of horses in the royal stables, and dishes to be cooked in the kitchen! This policy of 'ring fence' came practically to a close with Sir John Shore and Cornwallis, and has been remarkably summed up by the biographer of Clive who writes, "Clive sought the substance of territorial power under the fiction of a grant from the Mughal."

### *THE NEW PATTERN*

With Wellesley, from 1798, an important departure was made from the previous policy. The old policy was brought to its logical consequence. It enunciated the principle of Subsidiary Treaties. Gone were the days of reciprocity, fraternization and ingratiation. Instead of them, subordination, humility on the part of

the princes and arrogance on the part of the British held the day.

Lord Hastings took it further and completed the task. The underlying motives of the system were two: firstly, the combinations between the princes should be made impossible. Secondly, they should be rendered incapable of an independent defence. This was pursued with reckless zeal and prudent diplomacy. The Nizam was the first to enter the circus, followed by the Peshwa. After some time the Gaekwad also accepted it. In the meantime, Mysore had been conquered by Tipu Sultan, and a new state was created out of the territories thus conquered. Now the only independent powers were Holkar, Scindia and Bhonsle. At the conclusion of the second Marhatta War, Wellesley tried to dictate the treaties to these powers as well, but was called back by the Directors.

There was no new active aggression till the arrival of Lord Hastings in 1813. The old policy of neutrality was continued, because it was needed for internal consolidation.

An alliance was made with the Gaekwad, which made possible the settlement in Kathiawar and Gujarat. The alliance with the Peshwa strengthened their hands in Bundelkhand which was nominally under the suzerainty of the Peshwa. John Company entered into new treaties with States like Travancore where the treaties of equal footings were replaced by the treaties of subordinate alliance.

Lord Minto completed the chain by bringing the Sutlej States under British protection. This had become imperative due to the threat of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

All these treaties made certain important stipulations. Without generalising we would better quote *in extenso* the treaty made with Udaipur in 1818 as a pattern, in the Appendix B.

The benefits of this entwining system were immense to the Company. Firstly, it made the frontiers of the Company safe, and also made the defence of farther territories possible but with the purse of the



Princes. "Thus," observes Dr. Kanwar Raghbir Singh, "the ring fence policy was based on the policy of extending British authority, without endangering the line of direct defence."

This brought misery and sorrow to the people. The evils of the Subsidiary system have been well expressed by Thomas Munro in the following words:

"It is the natural tendency to render the Government of every country, in which it exists, weak and too oppressive; to extinguish all honourable spirit amongst higher classes of society, to degrade and impoverish the whole people. The usual remedy of a bad Government in India is a quiet revolution in the Palace, or a violent one by rebellion. But the presence of the British force cuts off every chance of remedy by supporting the princes on the throne against any foreign and domestic enemy. It renders him indolent by teaching him to trust the strangers for his security; cruel and avaricious by showing him that he has nothing to fear from the hatred of his subjects. Wherever the Subsidiary system is introduced, the country will soon bear the mark of it in the decaying villages, decreasing populations." Alongside the policy of Subsidiary alliances was pursued the policy of subordinate isolation (1813-1853). Though this approach was visualised by Wellesley, it fell to Lord Hastings to enunciate it in its full meaning. After the settlement with Nepal he turned to Central India, Rajputana and other neighbouring territories. With this the British supremacy was established in India except Sindh, Punjab and Burma. The Marhatta confederacy came to an end. The Peshwa became a prisoner. Holkar and Bhonsle and Scindia entered into treaty relations.

### *THE BRITISH BASE*

Three new states, two Muslim, Tonk and Jaoara, and one Marhatta, Satara, were created. Relations with the Marhatta and Rajput princes were finalised and in 1817, Sikkim too was brought into treaty relations.

So we can say with good reason that the settlements thus made by Lord Hastings, formed the base of British India.

The fundamental basis of his approach was the acceptance of the fact that British power is the supreme political authority in India. The consideration underlying this was also set out by Metcalfe, one of the 'principal architects of the British Empire in India', in a letter written in 1861 which reads: "They said that some power in India had always existed, to which the peaceable states submitted and in return obtained protection against the invasion of upstart chiefs and armies of lawless bandits, that the British Government now occupy the place of that protecting power and was the natural guardian of weak States."

Towards this end, matters were not only pursued with regard to the big States but Hastings 'paid equal attention to the small states'. Many small principalities had risen in Kathiawar and Central India due to confusion, he crystallised that position.

During all this time the authority of the Residents increased tremendously. Sirdar K. M. Panikkar remarks in that connection, "The Resident Ministers of the Company at Indian Courts were slowly but effectively transformed from diplomatic agents representing a foreign power into executive and controlling officers of superior Government." This increase in their power began to shape, what was called afterwards, 'political practices'. The malpractices in the states did not come to an end. So a need was being felt at that time that something should be done to remedy those defects. Moreover, the French threat and the Marhatta danger had disappeared, and the great Mughal had assumed the form of a dummy. More important still was the change in the mood of the home country, where the songs of imperialist glory had begun to be applauded, and profits of the colonial crops were being reaped. Thus came the directive from the Board of Directors of the Company which meant 'Abandoning no just and honourable accession of territory revenue.' The Governor Generals

who succeeded Bentinck were all exponents of the policy of 'creed of the grab'. Thus Coorg became the first casualty in 1841, it was annexed under the plea of maladministration, and the right of the Paramount Power to use its discretion. Similarly Sind was annexed, Punjab was conquered. These annexations also meant the addition of new states to the British orbit, and they were Khairpur, Kashmir and some other principalities. Satara, Jaipur, Jhansi, Sambalpur and Nagpur were annexed according to the Doctrine of the Lapse or escheat.

### *PIETY PAR EXCELLENCE*

Oudh 'whose wretched Princes', remarks Prof. Keith, 'were so absolutely loyal that no excuse could ever be imagined for depriving them of their power', was annexed, because in the words of Dalhousie, "The British Government would be guilty in the sight of God and man if it were any longer to aid in sustaining by its countenance an administration fraught with suffering of millions". But with it came discontent and a sense of frustration in the feudal aristocracy. Many of the aggrieved aided the rebels of 1857. Of this, people like Sir William Sleeman warned the Governor General, Lord Dalhousie, that "The annexation of Oudh would cost the British Power more than the value of ten kingdoms, and would inevitably lead to a mutiny of sepoys" and had put forward the view that they should be regarded as breakwaters, 'when they are all swept away, we shall be left to the mercy of our native army which may not always be sufficiently under our control.' But the Governor General, Lord Dalhousie, did not listen and his obstinate lust for extension awakened the common man among the enslaved. Thus the birth of modern Indian Nationalism. And with the rise of the country conscious middle class, a new philosophy of enlightenment was beginning to assert itself. Hence the need arose for the British for a new policy of preservation and fraternization with the princes. The Queen declared in her Imperial proclamation after the

defeat of India's uprising, 'we shall respect the rights, dignity and honour of the native princes as our own'. The need of such a policy was explained by Lord Canning in his despatch of April 30, 1860, when he said:

"It was long ago said by Sir John Malcolm that if we had made all India into Zillahs, it was not in the nature of things that our Empire should last fifty years; but if we could keep up a number of native states, without political power, but as royal instruments we should exist in India as long as our naval supremacy was maintained. Of the substantial correctness of this opinion I have no doubt, and recent events have made it more deserving of our attention than ever."

### *THE DAWN OF THE TWENTIETH DIMS THE DAZZLE*

Our story's next phase begins with the 20th century. Lytton's dream of making the states as the dens of reaction was being realised by various measures. Special laws were passed in British India, to ensure against the 'rebellious' or libellous propaganda against the Indian Princes. The policy of fraternisation was beginning to crystallise by inviting the princes for consultations on special occasions and making a facade of their Izzats and honours.

Lord Curzon struck a new note. He insisted upon the position of an overlord with all its implications, and tried to pull them up in matters of administration and tried to demand higher standards of efficiency. To dispel all doubts from the minds of the rulers, who were on some occasions trying to dream of some funny ideas, he declared in his Bahawalpur speech of November 12, 1903:

"The Sovereignty of the Crown is unchallenged. It has itself laid down limitations of its own prerogatives."

But this 'toughening up' of the approach was again moderated by the rise of the Indian National Movement, and by the breaking out of the First World War. Lord Hardinge was the first to realise the value of an organised body of powerful henchmen, and hence initiated

the practice of conference with ruling princes on matters of Imperial policies. The first such conference was held in 1913, on the eve of the first world war.

The anti-patriotic worth of the princes was now realised and was given expression to in various statements coming from the Paramount Power. Lord Hardinge called them, "Helpers and Colleagues in the great task of Imperial rule," and hence the need arose for a regular body of the rulers to make that help and assistance easier. Even as early as 1906, Lord Minto had written to the Secretary of State for India Lord Morley, in his letter of May 28, 1906:

"I have been thinking a good deal lately of a possible counterpoise to Congress aims. I think we may find a solution in the Council of Princes." The dream of Lytton and Minto was realised on 8th February 1921. The Duke of Connaught inaugurated it on behalf of His Majesty and the Maharaja of Bikaner became the first Chancellor, the Viceroy being the ex-officio Chairman. It had 108 members, they were members in their own right, i.e. they were entitled to permanent dynastic salute of 11 or more guns. There were 12 additional members representing 127 smaller states.

The need for a co-ordinating agency was fulfilled by the appointment of a Joint Committee. The Chamber had an elected Chancellor, and a Pro-Chancellor. The meetings were held annually in the Council House Delhi.

As was pointed out by the Indian Statutory Commission Report, it was "a deliberate, consultative and advisory body, but not an executive body."

The constitutional reforms in 1919, limited in scope as they were, however, were instrumental in bringing about a greater realisation of the problem of the states on the part of the Indian people. The Indian Legislature began to press for a greater say in matters of the states which, apart from other reasons, had become imperative due to the problem of economic development and industrialisation. The States naturally opposed such a move and the result was open hostility between

the rulers and the British Indian leaders.

Moreover demands for Dominion Status, Home Rule and complete freedom, were making headway in India. The British Government pressed the point of view that nothing could be done without the consent of the rulers, and thus averting all possibilities of a solution. The Princes were emphatic in their stand and the Maharaja of Patiala, the Chancellor, spoke on 23rd July 1926:

"I will simply say that one glance at the map of India from the standpoint of which I took at the beginning of this address, might have convinced those who were legislating for British India in 1919 that anything which they did for those portions of India, not under the rule of provinces, must necessarily affect both directly and indirectly the portions over which the princes held sway."

In one of his later addresses he was even more categorical:

"We and our people will never submit to being governed by British India, over many parts of which our states in former times held sway."

### *CRISIS AGAIN*

The matters were coming to a real crisis, the theory of direct relationship with the Paramount Power was then for the first time seriously advocated, and was vehemently contested by the Indian leaders, who contented that relations were not with the crown, as such, but with the Government of India, and as such with any Government succeeding the present one.

The Butler Committee appointed by the British Government examined the whole question of the states and gave its report in February 1929. It acknowledged that "the Indian princes have played an important role in the Imperial history. Their loyalty at the time of the mutiny, their noble services in the great war, their splendid devotion to the crown and the person of the King Emperor and the royal family are one of the proud things of our annals, and the glory of the empire."

It recommended:

"We feel bound, however, to draw attention to the really grave apprehension of the princes on this score, and to record our strong opinion that in view of the historical nature of the relationship between the Paramount Power and the princes, the latter should not be transferred without their own agreement to a relationship with a new Government in India responsible to an Indian Legislature."

The Paramount Power in that respect was defined as "the Crown acting through the Secretary of State for India and Governor General in Council, who are responsible to the Parliament of Great Britain."

All this was quite gratifying to the princes, but still they were feeling disappointed, because the Committee was categorical in rejecting the demand for a definition of Paramountcy and limiting the occasion for the exercise of suzerainty.

The worth of the worthless became the pet theme of every Britisher, who wanted to impress upon the British public, to look upon the Indian slave driving masters as really 'worthless instruments of the royal policy'.

In the proposed Federal Constitution of 1935, the "worth of the worthless" was fully realised. The princes were given over 2/5th of the representation in the Upper House and 1/3rd in the Lower House. Moreover, the accession to the Federation was not to be automatic, as in the case of the provinces, but had to be governed by the Instrument of Accession, signed by the rulers, and allowing them to make reservation in their favour. Even then, the authority of the Legislature had to be confined and circumscribed with regard to many important matters pertaining to the rulers and their states. The advantages of these provisions were explained by Lord Reading, who, while speaking in the Parliamentary Debate over the Constitution, said:

"If the princes came into the Federation of all India...there will always be a steadying influence. What is it we have most to fear? These are those who

agitate for independence, for the right to secede from the Empire altogether. I believe myself it is an insignificant minority and it has behind it the organisation of the Congress. It becomes, therefore, important, that we should get, what steadying influence we can against this view... There will be approximately 33% of the princes who will be members of the legislature, with 40% in the Upper House. There are, of course large bodies of Indians, who do not take to this view of the Congress. So that with that influence in the Federal Legislature, I am not afraid in the slightest degree of anything that may happen even if Congress managed to get largest share of seats."

### CONGRESS OFFENSIVE BEGINS

The advance of the national movement in India, against whom Reading wanted to insure, was reflected in the change of Congress policy as well. Formerly the Congress policy was non-interference in the matters of the States, but now the position changed. In Haripura session of the Congress the policy about the States was laid down. It said *vis-a-vis* the States people: 'Purna Swaraja means the whole of India, inclusive of States. For, the integrity and unity of India must be maintained in freedom as it has been maintained in subjection.'

But it was stressed that the struggle should be launched in the States not under the name of the Congress, but under independent popular organisations. The position was clarified in Ludhiana session of the States Peoples' Conference, which elected Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru as its Chairman. It declared in its main resolution:

"The time has come when this struggle should be co-ordinated with the wider struggle of Indian independence of which it is an integral part. Such an integrated all-India struggle must necessarily be carried on under the guidance of the Congress." Pandit Nehru in the same Conference laid down the policy of the national movement towards the smaller States and their integration.



Further, in the Udaipur Session of the Conference the goal of the Conference was described as "Attainment by peaceful and legitimate means of full responsible Government by the people of the States, as an integral part of a free and federated India."

### NEHRU'S CONDEMNATION

The conditions of the people in the states on whose behalf Pandit Nehru spoke was described by him as the voice of their sorrow and servility. In his autobiography he remarks:

"A sense of oppression comes, it is stifling and difficult to breathe, and below the still or slow moving waters there is stagnation and putrefaction. One feels hedged, circumscribed, bowed down in body and mind. And one sees the utter backwardness and misery of the people, contrasting vividly with the glaring ostentation of the princes' Palace. How much of the wealth of the state flows into the Palace for the personal needs, and luxuries of the prince, how little goes back to the people in the form of any service.

A veil of mystery surrounds these States. Newspapers are not encouraged there, and at the most a literary or semi-official weekly might flourish. Outside newspapers are often banned. Literacy is very low, except in some of the Southern States, Travancore, Cochin, etc., where it is far higher than British India. The principal news that comes from the State is of a Viceregal visit with all its pomp and ceremonial and mutually complimentary speeches, or of an extravagantly celebrated marriage or birthday of the ruler or of an agrarian rising. Special laws protect the princes from criticism, even in British India, and within the States the mildest criticism is rigorously suppressed. Public meetings are almost unknown, and even meetings for social purposes are often banned."

Another writer has spoken with red wrath, and has given some interesting facts when he says:—

"The King of England receives roughly one in every 16,000 of the total revenue, the King of Belgium one in

1,000, the King of Italy one in 500, the King of Denmark one in 300, the Emperor of Japan one in 100.... No King receives one in 17, like the Maharani of Travancore (which is the most progressive state in India), one in 13 as the Nizam of Hyderabad or the Maharaja of Baroda, or one in 5 as the Maharaja of Kashmir and Bikaner. The world would be scandalised to know that not a few princes appropriate one in 3 and one in 2 of the revenue of the State."

What about the civil liberties and freedom of the Press? Pandit Nehru's condemnation of the States in this respect will be supported by quoting a 'model law' regarding the 'objectionable matter'. Clause fifth and sixth of the law read:

5. No newspaper or book or paper shall be printed or published by any person or press, without the previous sanction of the Mahkma Khan (Special Department.)
6. No printing press or publisher in Mewar shall exchange its or his publication with any foreign publication. (Extract from the Press Law of Udaipur State.)

Thus it was a century ago that a Savant had spoken that "if they (the princes) are good for anything, it is for exhibiting". Sir Henry Cotton wrote in 1904, in his famous book, *India in Transition* that:—

"It is impossible to imagine a more sensitive body than our Indian feudatories. They are consumed by petty jealousies among themselves, by questions of precedence, of salutes, of the strength of their armies. The example of one chief is infectious, the others cannot be outdone, and they then vie with one another in their enthusiastic reception of the Viceroy on his occasional visits, and in the display of those barbaric attributes of loyalty which are the surest passport for a recognition and favour from the Government."

This was half a century ago, the defenders of the princes might acclaim. The position did not change ever afterwards. All along they remained faithful allies of show and stupidity, all along they have been deferring

to take to human ways, and this compelled even a person like Colonel Sir Kailash Haksar to remark that:—

“During the last century or so, the world has witnessed unedifying spectacle of rulers of States all out to strip their compeers in the race for honours and decorations.”

### *MAHATMA GANDHI ON THE PRINCES*

Mahatma Gandhi, with his sense of justice and truth for every one, was a person who would have kept quiet, had not the things gone really rotten. Immediately after the beginning of the Second World War, appeals were made by the British Government in the name of democracy and freedom, to Indians to defend the Empire. This was too much to be swallowed quietly by the saint of human rights and he wrote in the *Harijan* on 7th October 1939:

“But every Indian prince is a Hitler in his own state. He can shoot his people without coming under any law. Hitler enjoys no greater powers. If I am not mistaken, the German constitution does impose some limitations on the Fuhrer. Great Britain’s position as the self-constituted guardian of democracy is compromised so long as it has mere 500 autocrats as its allies. The princes can render Great Britain a real service when they can offer their resources not as so many autocrats but as true representatives of their people.” We need quote no further, it is enough.

### *TOWARDS INTEGRATION*

The Federation proposed by the 1935 scheme did not come into being. With the war, the crisis developed still further and an attempt was made to solve it.

The Cripps Plan, for the exit of British rulers from India, finally envisaged a Union in which it was optional for the States to participate. The non-participants were to have the same status as the rest of the Union. The Cripps Plan tended to make a differentiation between the states and the provinces as regards

the principle of non-adherence. The memorandum presented by the States Delegation to Sir Stafford Cripps, urged upon him to grant to the States the right to form their own Union, if they so desired. This, it was pointed out, need not mean the actual setting up of a separate Union, but it would certainly enhance the status of the States in relation to the Union.

The plan appeared to be unacceptable to the Indian leaders, and was then dropped. No serious attempt was made to resolve the crisis till the Simla Conference. This also proved to be a failure, and no agreement could be reached about the future of India.

The next phase was consequent upon a Parliamentary delegation sent to India to report on the Indian situation. This was followed by a Cabinet Mission, which consisted of Lord Pathick Lawrence, Sir Stafford Cripps and Mr. A. V. Alexander, and arrived in India on 23rd March 1946. In all these deliberations, the princes were repeatedly assured that 'there was no intention of making proposals for the entry of States into the Indian set up, on any basis, other than that of negotiations.'

On 22nd May 1946, the Cabinet Mission while issuing its memorandum, stressing the position in regard to the States, said that the rights of the States flowed from their relationship with the Crown, and would no longer exist, and that the rights surrendered by the States to the Paramount Power would revert to them. It was optional for the States to enter into any kind of relationship with the successor Government or Governments in British India, or to make an arrangement between themselves. The memorandum saw with favour the possibility of setting up different administrative units of the States, whenever possible.

The Cabinet Mission plan reaffirmed the same position. It mentioned that the Paramountcy had lapsed, and the States had full rights to decide their future, but expected that they would come to an agreement with the Union Government.

It also assured to the States that full autonomy

will be guaranteed to them in the Union, in all subjects except the ones acceded to, namely defence, foreign affairs and communications.

Further, it is proposed the setting up of a Negotiation Committee by the States, which could talk matters over with representatives of the Constituent Assembly.

The Congress had a number of objections and demanded many clarifications, including the demand for a more or less uniform system of elections to the Constituent Assembly, whether the representatives come from the provinces or from the States.

The Chamber of Princes, on the other hand, approved of the plan, and thought it 'fit' to provide a fair basis for further negotiations. It also appointed a Negotiation Committee to deal with the problem.

During the negotiations, it was urged upon the States Committee, that the British Government's statement of 20th February had introduced an urgency in the problem, and it would be helpful if the representatives of the States participated in the Constituent Assembly. Though the Negotiations Committee expressed its inability to accede to this demand, the representatives of all the States entitled to individual membership except Hyderabad, sent their representatives who took their seats in the Constituent Assembly. Representatives of different groups of States were also returned to the Assembly in due course.

The events were, however, quickening their pace, and on 3rd June 1947 came His Majesty's declaration, announcing its decision to transfer power to India and Pakistan Legislatures on 15th August. With regard to the States it said:

"His Majesty's Government wish to make it clear that the decisions announced above relate only to British India, and that their policy towards Indian States contained in the Cabinet Mission Memorandum of 22nd May 1946, remains unchanged."

Thus a piquant situation had arisen. The Britishers had been able to sow seeds of further dissension. The creation of 532 'Ulsters' was now in sight. But the time-

ly handling of the situation by the Indian National Government saved the collapse. It was announced on 27th June 1947 that the interim Government of India had decided to set up States Department, with Sirdar Vallabhbhai Patel as the Minister, and behind the scenes were working the experience and advice of seasoned statesmen like Sirdar K. M. Panikkar, Sir V. T. Krishnamachari and other distinguished ministers of Indian States and a few senior officers of the Indian Civil Service, like Mr. C. S. Venkatachar, Mr. M. K. Vellodi, Mr. V. P. Menon, Mr. V. Shankar and Pandit Hari Sharma.

The foremost task of the newly established States Department was naturally to devise means and implementing measures for preserving the unity of India.

Sirdar Patel issued his famous statement of 5th July 1947, inviting the States to accede to the Indian Union. He spoke with the heart of a true patriot and with the mind of a great statesman:

"This country with its institutions is the proud heritage of the people who inhabit it. It is an accident that some live in the States and some in British India, but all alike partake of its culture and character. We are knit together by bonds of blood and feeling no less than of self-interest. None can segregate us into segments; no impassable barriers can be set up between us. I suggest that it is, therefore, better for us to make laws, sitting together as friends, the Rulers of States and their people in Councils of Constituent Assembly, in this spirit of friendliness and co-operation in a joint endeavour, inspired by common allegiance to our motherland for the common good of us all.

"We are at a momentous stage in the history of India. By common endeavour we can raise the country to a new greatness while lack of unity will expose us to fresh calamities. I hope the Indian States will bear in mind that the alternative to cooperation in the general interest is anarchy and chaos which will overwhelm great and small in a common ruin if we are unable to act together in the minimum of common tasks. Let

not the future generations curse us for having had the opportunity but failed to turn it to our mutual advantage. Instead, let it be our proud privilege to leave a legacy of mutually beneficial relationship which should raise this sacred land to its proper place amongst the nations of the world and turn it into an abode of peace and prosperity."

This appeal was strengthened by the popular upsurge in a number of States, and by the realisation among the princes, that they will have to bow down to the new dawn of freedom and enlightenment, and thus they should save whatever they can for themselves, and for their heirs and successors. It was subsequently agreed that the States will sign a document as Instrument of Accession to India, the text of which is given in Appendix C.

This document had an unexpected success. By 15th August 1917, all the States coming under the orbit of the Dominion of India had acceded to it, except the States of Hyderabad, Kashmir and Junagadh. By the end of 1948, however, all of them had acceded to the Dominion of India.

After the accession, came the major task of integration. The Congress, as we have seen, was pledged to the abolition of petty units, right from the thirties. The actual handling of the situation made the problem still more urgent.

It was decided that the smaller states should either be merged with bigger units or with the neighbouring provinces. Though it was at first decided that the states which had individual representation in the Constituent Assembly will be considered as viable units, but at later stage it became apparent that many of them will have to be merged in the Union or the provinces. There were reasons more than one to force that conclusion:—

1. Many of them had a very discontinuous territory, thus making smooth administration difficult.
2. Many of them had cultural and linguistic affiliations with the neighbouring states and provinces, which made their separateness anomalous.

3. It was an unnecessary ornamental expenditure to keep numerous units of administration.

Keeping these considerations in mind, schemes were drawn up for bringing different States into certain viable units. Some States like Hyderabad, Kashmir, Mysore, Bhopal, etc., were allowed to exist. Others were formed into Unions like Rajasthan which included Jaipur, Jodhpur, Udaipur, Bharatpur and other smaller States. The Punjab States were grouped under the Patiala and East Punjab States Union, and Simla States were merged into Himachal Pradesh.

Different arrangements were made as regards the future of the rulers. In all cases the privy purse of the rulers was fixed, and their personal property was allowed to remain with them. In the case of Unions, different arrangements were made. In some the Presidentship of the Council of Rulers was made hereditary, in some by rotation and in some by election.

The president of the Council of rulers, and the Rulers of the separate units were called the Rajpramukhs, except in case of Kashmir, where the monarchy was altogether abolished and the Head of the State was called the Sadar-i-Riyasat. The Rajpramukhs enjoyed the usual powers of the Governors. A provision was made that the other rulers too would continue to enjoy the same privileges and prestige as they enjoyed before 1949. This was followed by the integration and merger of States under the leadership of Sirdar Patel.

### *ARGUMENT FOR INTEGRATION*

What made the ruling princes of India to integrate their States with the Union of the Republic of India?

They found that the public had lost all sympathy for them for the maladministration of their States for over a century and a half and for their having no contact directly with their subjects. With the support of the British Government in India, they were doing exactly what they wanted to do without helping their subjects in their welfare. Most of the money derived from the revenue of the States were squandered by the



princes on their personal pleasures and salaries of large number of officers, staff and great pomp and glory. In some States not even 10% of the State revenue was spent on public works of the Government, such as roads, hospitals, education, etc., and other institutions necessary for the welfare of the people of the State. As the judicial and executive functions were combined and the ruling princes had the final voice even in judicial cases, the power of the princes was supreme. He could hang a man at his own free will or fine a person a large sum of money. The reign of the princes had become a terror in their States and the British Government interfered in very rare cases and whenever they interfered with the administration of the ruling princes, it was because of the fact that the ruling prince was not popular with them or had national and patriotic inclinations towards the national movement of the people.

But now the old order was no more. So the princes thought that their time was over and that public opinion was so much against them that there was no choice but to surrender themselves and integrate their States with the Union of India. The Maharaja of Navanagar, called the Jamsahib, was asked once by a friend why he and other princes of India easily accepted the advice of the Government of India to surrender their powers to them, said that he made up his mind to integrate with India after Sirdar Patel had come to his State and addressed a meeting which was attended by over 100,000 men, women and children. At that meeting the enthusiasm in favour of the Congress was so great that the Maharaja said to himself that the time had come that they should no longer oppose the national aspirations of the people of the country.

### **RAJPRAMUKHS**

Some of the princes who were ambitious and who had large territories over which they were reigning for a long time were brought around by Sirdar Patel. Some ambitious princes were selected by the Government of

India to become Rajpramukhs and they really thought that they would become Rajpramukhs and emperors instead of kings having under them several States instead of their own State. It is interesting to mention here the gist of a conversation which took place between Maharaja Jagatjit Singh of Kapurthala and the Ambassador of Belgium in India, at a dinner party given to the Maharaja of Kapurthala by the French Ambassador, Monsieur Daniel Levy at the French Embassy. The Belgian Ambassador, Prince De Ligne, who was also present, told the Maharaja in my presence that, as Upa-Rajpramukh, he was virtually the King of the whole Kingdom of Patiala and the East Punjab States. The Maharaja was mightily pleased to hear this and seemed to agree with what the Ambassador said to him. The princes were allured by this temptation and it worked well. They surrendered their own kingdoms and accepted to become Rajpramukhs, though constitutional Rajpramukhs were only figureheads as the power was to be vested in the people. Again some princes thought that the times were changing and soon they would be deprived of their States and status and thought that whatever they could get out of the then Government of India would be much safer than to leave to destiny to shape their future. Some of their Prime Ministers, such as Sirdar K. M. Panikkar (Bikaner) and Sir V. T. Krishnamachari (Jaipur), Sirdar Hardit Singh Mallik (Patiala), Mr. A Srinivasan (Gwalior), Sir Ramaswamy Mudaliar (Mysore), Sir B. L. Mitter (Baroda), and many others who were national-minded and who in their heart of hearts never liked the perpetuation of the rule of the princes began to advise their rulers that it would be safer for them to surrender their political power and receive from the Government of India large sums of money as privy purse, jewellery and have their rights and privileges intact than to cause difficulties for the Government. Even they put fear in the wavering minds of the rulers that unless they surrendered sovereignty gracefully, their fate will be like that of the Tzar of Russia and Emperor Louis XVI of France who could

have saved their lives and thrones if they had surrendered to the will of the people in time. The Maharajas, without murmur, accepted the advice of their Prime Ministers and decided to integrate their States with India. The above-named ministers were the national heroes to overthrow the princes and their names will remain in history as great stalwarts who helped to remove the yellow-patched regions from the map of India. This brought complete unity and uniformity throughout India.

### *THE LAST CONFERENCE*

Sirdar Patel, the Iron Man of India, called a conference of the prominent Maharajas which was attended, besides other important rulers of the States, by Maharaja Yadwindra Singh of Patiala, Maharaja Jivaji Rao Scindia of Gwalior and Maharaja Jam Sahib Ranjit Singh of Navanagar, Maharaja Pratap Singh Gaekwad of Baroda and Maharaja Sadul Singh of Bikaner who spoke at the meeting in favour of accession of States to the Union of India and persuaded other princes who were wavering to merge with India. The powerful and mighty personality of Sirdar Patel overawed the princes and left them with no option but to comply with his wishes. He carried out his policy by tempting the rulers with royal privileges and handsome privy purses and alluring them with high-sounding titles of Rajpramukhs (emperors) and Upa-Rajpramukhs (kings). The rulers were thus entrapped to surrender their sovereign rights and powers. Like sheep, one ruler after another signed the Instrument of Accession and those rulers who resisted and refused to accede to Indian Union got into hot waters. Ultimately, they were forced to merge their States with the Indian Union. A police action, as it was called by Sirdar Patel, though in reality it was an invasion by the Indian army, was taken on September 18, 1948 in Hyderabad and the Nizam of Hyderabad, 108 hours later, surrendered unconditionally, after his army was beaten and its Commander-in-Chief General Eldros laid his sword at the feet of

General Chaudhuri who was commanding the Indian forces. Under the advice of Dr. Ramaswamy Mudaliar, the Dewan of Mysore State, the Maharaja stood out against accession but after a brief and ferocious struggle he agreed to merge. Dr. C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer, Diwan of Travancore State, had sought shelter under a theory of divine delegation of powers and refused to let the State, be acceded. Ultimately the Maharaja himself requested Sirdar Patel for the merger.

Some of the privileges which the rulers enjoyed included retention of their palaces, exemption of taxes, free electricity and water, a special red plate on their motor cars, flying flags of their States, exemption from inspection of their baggage at the customs counter when returning from abroad, and exemption from appearing in law courts. A Maharaja could not be sued in any criminal or civil court without the permission of the Government of India. Salutes in accordance with their status were to be fired on ceremonial occasions and the Guard of Honour and red carpets were to be provided on such occasions as in the time of the British rulers. They were also allowed to post military guards at their Palaces. This was not the end of the privileges. The Maharajas were allowed to retain their valuable jewellery worth crores of rupees except some crown jewels which belonged to the State and from which some rulers took away the real precious stones, viz., diamonds, rubies and other precious gems and replaced them by false ones. Real pearl necklaces worth crores of rupees were replaced by imitation pearl necklaces and handed over to the Government of India. Disappearance of a seven string pearl necklace valued at over two crores and the diamond necklace with three priceless stones, Star of the South, Eugene, Shahee Akbar as well as two pearl-studded carpts from Baroda is well known. Sirdar Patel intentionally shut his eyes to this loot, while some officers of the then Ministry of State connected with the negotiations with the rulers made hay. The Maharajas offered them gifts in cash, jewellery and gold cigarette cases to get better deals from them in privy purses and

other privileges.

Thus, the rulers surrendered their sovereignty and as a *quid pro quo*, they were granted handsome privy purses and other privileges. It took over a year or so to settle up the matter. Covenants were drawn up and signed by the rulers giving up their own political power while the Government of India assured them that their rights, privileges, honours and titles which they had secured by their Treaties with the British Government of India would be honoured and maintained by the Government of India. The terms of the covenant which the ruling princes signed throw light on this point of importance.

Slowly and surely, as expected, the princes not only lost their political power but became financially too weak to run their own huge palaces and pay their large household staff as well as to maintain their large kitchens which were run on European and Indian styles under the supervision of European and Indian Chefs. The Maharajas found that they were not welcome in the present setup of the Government of India and some of them who had a great liking for Europe and America began to go there more frequently and took with them whatever jewellery and, in some cases, cash they could take and deposited them in banks in European and American countries. In accordance with the terms of the covenant they were to have certain diplomatic privileges. Their boxes were not opened at the ports by the customs officers both on embarkation and disembarkation and thus they could easily carry from India whatever they wanted to carry with them on these trips to America and Europe. Thus they took away most of the jewellery and valuables which cannot now come back to this country.

The princes also began to liquidate their furniture and valuable paintings and other pieces of art at ridiculous prices. The gold and silver services for dinner were sold at a very low price. Even gold and silver Howdahs which were used on elephants to carry members of the royal family and ministers and prin-

cial Sirdars of the State on ceremonial occasions were scrapped and whatever gold and silver was collected was sold at one-fifth or one-fourth of the actual market price. The houses and other immovable properties were sold in many cases at half or one-third of the market price. The main idea of the princes was to have liquid cash after selling their movable and immovable properties. There was at one time great struggle between the Government of India and the princes as to what jewellery the princes had a right to sell and what other things they had not the right to sell. Some of the unscrupulous princes could manage to sell even some of their heirlooms while the Government had forbidden them to sell. The object of the Government of India and particularly of Sirdar Patel was that somehow or other the feudal system should disappear from this country even at the cost of paying the princes more than they could have ordinarily got in the political struggle which was going on vigorously at that time for their overthrow.

### *RAJPRAMUKHS AND THE DEMOCRATIC SETUP*

After some time it was found that the portfolios of Rajpramukhs and Upa-Rajpramukhs were superfluous and they were abolished by an Act of Parliament. Handsome salaries which the Rajpramukhs were drawing besides their privy purses were stopped.

In July 1967, the All India Congress Committee, representing the Ruling Party, passed a resolution in their meeting that privileges and privy purses of erstwhile rulers should be abolished and the Government of India is planning to amend the constitution in this respect and they have the backing of the major Opposition parties in Parliament.

This would end an anachronism of the worst type and the saga of show and squander would come to a close.

The rulers are raising hue and cry that the All India Congress Committee Resolution, if implemented by the Government, would amount to a flagrant violation of the constitutional guarantee given to the princes

under Article 291 and of the rights and privileges contracted upon and guaranteed by the Government of India under Article 362 of the Constitution.

The choice is rightly made by the ruling Congress Party between pledges to five hundred million lean and undernourished people and six hundred wealthy princes.

## ***After the Integration***

**T**HE SAGA OF "spend and slumber" is over, but what is happening to the princes now, one may well ask? The answer to this question is quite heartening. Evidently, many among the princes are changing their outlook on life entirely. As a matter of fact, they have been already undergoing that change since the last twenty-two years. Just like mental cases, after electric shock therapy in a mental hospital, the Maharajas in India, after centuries of slumber and lethargy and after leading vicious and aimless lives, protected by the British Power, received shock therapy, when suddenly they were told that they should merge their States in the Union of the Republic of India. This was in reality a blessing in disguise for them. The Government of India allowed them to retain their Palaces, private properties, jewellery and they were permitted to travel abroad with diplomatic passports and the Government of India had also assured them that their rights and privileges as Princes, would be maintained and gun salutes will be fired on ceremonial occasions and the Guard of Honour and red carpets would be provided on official occasions, as previously in the time of their British sovereigns. Besides this, huge sums of money were granted to them as privy purses in addition to the big salaries to those who were nominated as Rajpramukhs and Upa-Rajpramukhs. These salaries, however, during the last twenty-two years have been considerably reduced.

This shock of integration awakened the Maharajas and made them conscious of the realities of life. They are now coming into the picture of India's national life almost in all spheres of activity. Some Maharajas have joined the Foreign Ministry on high posts and they are making their mark in that Ministry. The Raja of Mandi and the Maharaja of Kutch were appointed as Ambassadors in foreign countries in the beginning while Raja



Digvijai Chandra of Jubbal, Thakur Sahib of Kotah Sangani and Raja of Ali Rajpur and other princes started their career from the first ladder in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Several sons and relatives of the rulers joined the army as Lieutenants while some Maharajas have taken to politics as their career. Maharaja Karni Singh of Bikaner and Maharaja Lakshman Singh of Dungarpur were elected to the Parliament of India. A sagacious Maharani Rajmata Kamlendu Mati of Tehri Garhwal was elected to the Rajya Sabha (Upper House) and so was Maharani Mohinder Kaur of Patiala elected to the Rajya Sabha. Maharaja Karni Singh of Bikaner has been taking keen interest in the debates in Lok Sabha and he and other rulers including Maharaja R. N. Singh Deo of Patna have been championing the cause of the people. Maharaja R. N. Singh Deo is at present Chief Minister of Orissa. Maharaja Karni Singh has also taken up farming and has started a large farm in Ganganagar and he has started a huge fertiliser and cement factory in his former state of Bikaner, jointly with his brother princes. The Begum of Bhopal has also taken to mechanised farming near Bhopal and many princes are taking to developing orchards and horse breeding and cattle breeding on a scientific scale prompted by their love of nature and animals.

Some Maharajas are taking great interest in the commercial and industrial sectors and have done a good deal towards improving the economic state of the country. His Highness the Maharaja Shri Jai Chand Raja Wadiar of Mysore State, who afterwards was appointed the Rajpramukh of Mysore State and the Governor of Madras and who is known for his intellectual capability and patriotic views, has been investing large sums of money in several industrial concerns in the Mysore State, such as Kolar Goldfields, Vendrahati Iron Works, Mysore Sandalwood and Oil factory, silk factories and several similar concerns. He has been constantly making further investments in the above industries which are growing bigger and bigger and thus providing employment and means of livelihood for hundreds and thousands of people

in Mysore State. Whenever a new concern is floated in Mysore or a charitable institution is opened, the Maharaja has been contributing handsomely to them. Thus he has been taking keen interest in the socio-economic welfare of not only the people of his former State but of the country as a whole.

Similar is the case of Syed Murtaza Ali Khan, Nawab of Rampur, reputed for his sweetness of speech and grace of manners. Again the Maharaja of Diwas Junior, the sporting and popular Maharaja Sir Pratap Singh Malvinder of Nabha, the Raja of Bilaspur and the Maharaja of Tehri Garhwal, his two brothers and other princes are among those who have forgotten their exaltation of the past and have now taken their rightful place as common citizens of the motherland.

Because of the growing tendency among the princes to come more and more into the political and socio-economic life of the country, there is a bright chance for them to become popular and serve the country.

In northern India most of the Maharajas have taken up farming right earnestly. Not only have they brought under cultivation several thousands of acres of land but they have also encouraged their brothers and relatives to take up extensive cultivation. Similarly many princes in Saurashtra and Rajasthan have taken up cultivation of land. By taking to farming as profession some of them feel that they will not only be owners of the land but perhaps they will also be able to use the cultivators and tillers of their land as voters for their election to the Parliament and the State Legislatures if they wish to contest an election.

Most of the princes are now gradually adapting themselves to the new conditions, though some of them still have wrong notions about their importance and are dreaming of creating Maharajasthan. They should remember that legally they are common citizens of India and have no other status and if they ever think of the Balkanisation of India, then they will be living in a fool's paradise. They should cease plotting and intriguing against the interests of the motherland by enter-

taining such ideas of appealing to the World Court or to some foreign powers for the restoration or even the retention of their princely status.

However, the reassuring fact is that some close relations of the erstwhile rulers have taken up posts in big commercial concerns, as employees of these concerns. This gives a clear indication as to how the minds of the most among the princes are working.

A prince from the Punjab has recently been employed in a business house and many other princes are employed in different Indian and foreign business houses. One of the princes remarked in a social gathering that he did not mind working as an ordinary man in a business concern but his mother, the Maharani, was feeling much pained and dishonoured by his taking up a job in a business house. She told her son what his father would have said if he was alive and had known that his son was taking up a job in a business concern like an ordinary man. This young prince did not listen to the advice of his out-of-date mother. He selected his own course of life and felt satisfied and happy in discharging his duties like a good citizen and earning his livelihood in an honourable way.

Some of the rulers and their relatives have taken up posts in the Army, Navy and Air Force. Prince Bhawani Singh, the eldest son of the heir-apparent of the Maharaja of Jaipur, an Officer in the Indian Army, was formerly attached to the President's Bodyguard as an Adjutant. The Maharaja of Jaipur who was appointed as the Ambassador of India returned to India after completing the term of his office. The young Maharaja Sukhjit Singh of Kapurthala is in the army and holds the rank of Colonel. When he succeeded his father Maharaja Paramjit Singh of Kapurthala as the Maharaja of Kapurthala, he was asked by the author whether he would give up his army career and look after his large property. He replied that these Palaces (making a sign with his left hand towards his own Palace) are like glass houses while the army career is grand and noble. On account of his simple living he has endeared him-

self to his brother officers and soldiers in his regiment and to all who come in contact with him. He receives his former subjects at the Palace with great affection and respect and has a kind word for every one whom he meets. The author asked him whether he would like to join any particular political party and seek a seat in the Parliament of India or the States Legislature. He replied that an Army Officer has no politics and he is only there to serve his motherland. Such forward-looking princes are bound to play a constructive role in rebuilding India.

There is a growing keenness on the part of the Maharajas and their sons, daughters and relatives for entering public life and they are competing with their Indian brothers and sisters in all walks of life. They are competing for posts in the Ministry of External Affairs and other ministries of the Government of India and the Governments in the States. The young Maharaja Fateh Singh Rao Gaekwad of Baroda is showing great interest in the socio-economic sphere and has been interesting himself in the welfare of his erstwhile subjects of Baroda and has been investing his money in business concerns in Baroda and outside. He is the Chairman and Director of many industrial and business concerns. Maharaja Fateh Singh Gaekwad of Baroda is at present a Minister in the Government of Gujarat Pradesh.

There are other Maharajas and Maharanis who are taking keen interest in the welfare and progress of the country ever since India became independent. Maharaja Karan Singh of Jammu and Kashmir is the youngest Cabinet Minister in the Government of India, in charge of the portfolio of Tourism and Civil Aviation. At the early age of 18, he was appointed Regent of Jammu and Kashmir by his father Maharaja Hari Singh. Since then he was continuously the Head of the State for 18 years, as Regent from 1949 to 1952, as the elected Sadar-i-Riyasat from 1952 to 1965 and as Governor from 1965 till 1967. He had to resign before standing for election to the Lok Sabha.

He is a unique instance of being the last represen-

tative of the old order, becoming by the will of the people the first representative of the new order. Imbued with democratic ideas, he prefers to be called simply Dr. Karan Singh and does not relish to be called by various titles to which he is entitled, such as His Highness Maharaja Inder Mohinder Bahadur, Sipar-i-Sultanat, etc. etc. Maharaja Bhanu Prakash Singh of Narsinghgarh is the Senior Dy. Minister of Industrial Development. The author met some of these Maharajas at a dinner party a short while ago at the house of a friend in New Delhi. They seemed to have adapted themselves to the changed conditions as the author did not see any difference in the behaviour, talk and dress of these Maharajas from the other guests who were not of the princely order.

Undoubtedly, with their education, wealth and the influence which the princes still have on the people of their erstwhile States, and after the shock therapy which they received at the time of the integration of States and with the dwindling down of their financial resources coupled with the new outlook, they have a golden chance to rise in the estimation of the people of India, provided they continue to take patriotic interest in the welfare of their motherland and cease to think of themselves as super-being as they did in the bygone past.

